

TIES SET TO WORSEN AS PAKISTAN BLOCKS NEW INDIAN DIPLOMAT'S APPOINTMENT AS CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES IN ISLAMABAD
PAGE 6

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Back to business

A dozen listed Teknaf narcotics previously hiding now seen again, taking over yaba trade

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAT, back from Teknaf

In the home ministry list of narcotics traders, Sirajul Mostofa Chowdhury Lahu's serial number is 764.

A residence of Tulatuli area of Whaikhyang union of Teknaf upazila, Lahu is wanted in seven different cases and he went into hiding after the nationwide anti-narcotics drive began in May 2018.

But now he has come out of his hideout and got involved in yaba smuggling again.

Similar is the case of Sayed Alam.

An inhabitant of Mazarpara village of Whaikhyang, he is wanted in three narcotics cases. A few months ago, he allegedly made a settlement with now suspended Teknaf OC Pradeep Kumar Das to avoid arrest and just vanished.

Recently, Sayed was seen roaming in Teknaf.



Since July 31, there has been no significant drives against narcotics traders by the district police while Rab and BGB had big success in seizure of yaba pills.

Like these two, over a dozen listed narcotics dealers of Teknaf, who went into hiding after the anti-narcotics drive began, returned and took over their smuggling trade.

During a visit to Teknaf, the gateway of smuggling the crazy drug into Bangladesh from Myanmar, these correspondents managed to collect details of these narcotics dealers who have reappeared on the scene.

Even the 102 top godfathers and dealers, who surrendered to police on February 16 last year, are also trying to get released on bail in the two cases filed against them each -- over arms and narcotics.

At least 10 of them have been granted bail in the arms case and they are now trying to get bail in the narcotics case, according to jail sources.

In an April 2019 investigation by

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The mighty Jamuna devouring Char Dighapara Government Primary School in Bogura's Sariakandi upazila yesterday. The school building was constructed in FY 2004-5 at a cost of Tk 28 lakh. The authorities said the river was at least two kilometres away from the school building three years ago.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

OC PRADEEP, WIFE Court orders attachment of properties

It denies him bail too

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

A Chattogram court yesterday passed an order to freeze all movable and immovable property of Chumki Karan, wife of former officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station Pradeep Kumar Das, in connection with a graft case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Meanwhile, the court rejected the bail prayer of Pradeep, who is accused in Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan murder, in the graft case for amassing illegal wealth.

The court of Metropolitan Session Judge Sheikh Ashfaqur Rahman passed the confiscation order after the investigation officer

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



'Winter is coming'

PM warns that pandemic may worsen in winter; asks all to prepare

UNB, Dhaka

Expressing apprehension that the Covid-19 situation may deteriorate to some extent during the upcoming winter, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked everyone to bolster preparation to fight the pandemic in wintertime.

"Winter is coming. The situation may deteriorate to some extent. But we've to take preparation from right now," she said while receiving donation of Tk 165.6 crore for the PM's Relief and Welfare Fund from over 40 organisations.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

A battle brewing over Hefajat helm

Anti-govt elements including Jamaat out to take control, govt moves to retain it

RASHIDUL HASAN and FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

With the demise of Hefajat-e-Islam chief Shah Ahmad Shafi, several anti-government elements, including the Jamaat-e-Islami, have moved to establish control over the Islamist outfit and its stronghold, Hathazari madrasa, claim several Hefajat leaders.

These elements -- both political and non-political -- are using a section of Hefajat leaders, including its Secretary General Junaid Babunagari who reportedly took a stance against Shafi and his son Anas Madani, to have a grip on Hefajat and the Qawmi madrasa, they say.

Several lakh students study at Qawmi madrasas across the country and different political forces, on many occasions, reportedly used them to materialise their political goals.

Talking to The Daily Star, Hefajat Joint Secretary General Maulana Zafrullah Khan said several anti-government political forces and a section of Islamic intellectuals have jumped at the opportunity to re-establish ties with Hefajat for using it against the government.

On the other hand, the government is trying to retain its control on Hefajat and Hathazari madrasa following the revolt against Shafi and his son, he mentioned.

Abul Kasem Kasemi, another Hefajat leader in the capital, said that with new leaders at the helm of Hefajat and Hathazari madrasa, it may take some time to fathom whether there would be a new polarisation.

Jamaat is making efforts to repair relations with Hefajat on which it and the BNP reportedly banked on during the 2013 movement to oust the AL government, said a number of Hefajat leaders.

Several Jamaat leaders, including its Secretary General Mia Golam

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

SC keeps four cases against Khaleda stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld four High Court orders that stayed the trial proceedings against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in three cases for vandalism and arson and one for defamation.

The apex court, however, asked the High Court to hear and dispose of the rules issued in connection with the cases.

With yesterday's orders, the SC has so far upheld 12 HC orders that stayed trial proceedings of 12 cases against Khaleda,

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DGHS official, wife siphoned off Tk 40cr

ACC probe finds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Suspended accountant of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) Abzal Hossain and his wife Rubina Khanam have lauded about Tk 40 crore abroad, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) found in its investigation.

Abzal, who surrendered before court on August 26th, faced a 14-day remand on two separate cases filed by the anti-graft body.

An ACC official, preferring anonymity, said the Tk 40 crore is dispersed across 20 bank accounts in three countries, including Canada, Australia and Malaysia.

Sources said that the commission is trying to freeze the accounts.

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A large portion of this hill in near Sylhet's Pathantula-Madina market has been cut. Locals allege that the hill-cutting work is done by men working for an influential local in the dead of night. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASTIR

How hills of Sylhet turn flat

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

There are laws, High Court order, protests of environmentalists and a dedicated government office to keep vigilance, but nothing can stop hillock cutting in Sylhet.

For over two decades, around half the hillocks have been razed, environmental activists claimed.

It may lead to serious environmental disasters, they said.

As urbanisation of Sylhet city is happening fast, the demand for plain land to construct buildings is rising and hillocks are being cut.

Hillock cutting is rampant mostly in Sylhet city and its suburbs which falls in Sylhet Sadar upazila.

Hillocks have been damaged in Hawladarpara, Karepara, Gowabari, Bagmara, Dolia, and Baluchar and

many other places of Sylhet city and its suburbs.

The Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act, 1995 (amended 2010), strictly prohibits the cutting or razing of any types of hills and hillocks by any individual or institution. Exceptions may be made, but only after a clearance certificate is issued by the Department of Environment (DoE).

Moreover, on November 2011, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) filed a writ petition with the High Court to stop hillock cutting and the court banned cutting of any types of hillock in Sylhet.

Recently, hillock cutting at Gowabari Tila and Majumdar Tila in Sylhet city's ward-8 and its adjacent areas in the Sadar upazila is being heavily criticised.

Majumdar Tila is being ravaged for years, part by part, and now hillock cutting is going on there at nights.

Lawyer Dilip Kumar Deb, a resident of Hawladarpara, said, "Many hillocks, including Majumdar Tila, have been ravaged in the last couple of years. Owners and their associates cut the hillock at nights so that they cannot be noticed. Officials are aware of it, but they don't take any necessary steps to stop this."

The Gowabari Tila was being cut using the excavator of Sylhet City Corporation. On August 26, the DoE fined Nur Uddin, brother of ward-8 councillor, Tk 1.40 lakh for cutting the hillock.

Councillor Iliasur Rahman was also fined Tk 1 lakh for cutting hillock inside his house in 2015.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

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BANGLADESH UPDATE



1,544
New cases in 24hrs



3,48,916
Total cases



4,939
Deaths



2,56,565
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE



962,587
Deaths



31,061,962
Total cases

ATTACK ON UNO

Suspect Rabiul confesses before magistrate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Rabiul Islam finally gave a confessional statement before a court yesterday, admitting that he was involved with the brutal hammer attack on Wahida Khanam, upazila nirbahi officer of Dinajpur's Ghoraghat Upazila, on September 3rd.

Rabiul, a former staffer of the Ghoraghat UNO office, was brought inside the court complex on a pickup van of the district's Detective Branch of police (DB) and produced before court around 10:00am yesterday, after the end of his 9-day remand.

The Senior Judicial Magistrate's court of Ismail Hossain recorded the confessional statement, said Imam Zafar, the investigation officer (IO) and officer-in-charge of Dinajpur DB.

Rabiul confessed to his crime under section 164 before the court, said the IO after emerging from the court building around 3:30pm.

He, however, refused to answer any further questions.

Later, the DB then dropped Rabiul back at Dinajpur jail.

On September 12, Rabiul was taken on a 6-day remand after Debdas Bhattacharyya, the DIG of Rangpur Range police, told journalists that Rabiul confessed to authorities

concerned about his involvement in the attack.

As his 6-day remand ended on September 17, the DB produced him before court to record his statement, but he did not give his statement during his 7-hour long stay at court.

He was then taken into a 3-day remand, which ended yesterday.

Rahidul Islam, eldest brother of Rabiul, who was present at court yesterday, said "It seemed my brother was tortured in remand. I noticed Rabiul was walking abnormally."

Sources said Rabiul carried out the hammer attack on the UNO out of anger from his joblessness.

However, higher authorities concerned have refused to talk about the issue.

Rab had earlier arrested three people after examining the CCTV footage from September 3rd attack and claimed that Asadul Haq, a district Jubo League leader, Nabirul Islam and Santu Biwas were also involved with the attack and had confessed.

After the claim, the case was given to Dinajpur DB, whose investigation revolved only around Rabiul.

The DB has so far recorded confessional statement of five witnesses in the case since September 13, said a court source.



PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

Pedestrians and cyclists undertaking a precarious crossing over a section of a Bailey Bridge being repaired on the Tangail-Aricha regional highway in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila. This photo was taken yesterday.

Back to business

FROM PAGE 1

The Daily Star, it was revealed that the surrender of these 102 narcos and arrest of others actually did little to hinder the yaba trade -- with family members and agents continuing the smuggling on their behalf.

Sources say that narcotics smuggling in Teknaf gained fresh momentum recently, while the district police stopped discharging special duties like combatting drug business and confined themselves to routine tasks following the arrest of OC Pradeep over the killing of Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan.

Since July 31 till September 12, there was no significant drives against narcotics by the district police while Rab and BGB had big success in seizure of yaba pills.

Around 28 lakh yaba pills were seized by Rab and BGB in separate drives in 40 days since July 31 -- which is one of the highest recoveries in recent times.

This newspaper tried to get a version of the district police but no official was found available for comment.

Md Anwar Hossain, deputy inspector general of Chattogram Range of police, however, on September 13 said they were doing everything to maintain law and order in Cox's Bazar.

During his recent visit to the district, the DIG said he instructed police officials to perform duties in line with the law and remain vigilant.

Asked about district police doing only routine jobs since July 31, he said, "I have also instructed the officials to stay alert without hampering regular work."

BACK AGAIN

Mohammad Alam was arrested by Teknaf police over his involvement in yaba trade on December 14, 2018.

But he was shown arrested in the court on January 2, 2019, and two cases --- for arms and narcotics -- were

filed against him.

Sources claimed Alam was kept in the torture cell of OC Pradeep for 17 days and he was shown arrested after he paid the official a hefty amount.

Within a year, Alam managed to secure bail and went into hiding. But recently he has come back. A local source in Teknaf, who closely knows Alam's activity, confirmed this to this newspaper.

Some other narcotics dealers -- previously in hiding but recently seen moving around -- have been identified as Shah Alam, Md Yousuf, Sambanu, Md Siraj and Abdul Aziz.

Moja Alam, son of Abdul Gaffar of Jaliapara area of Teknaf, a narcotics dealer named in the home ministry list, has also been seen in different areas of the coastal district, sources claimed.

Contacted, Shah Alam, wanted in the police list, said his name was wrongly mentioned as a drug dealer. "I am not involved in any kind of illegal trade," he claimed.

This newspaper also tried to communicate with some other dealers but their mobile phones were either found switched off or they did not answer the calls.

RECOVERY 'ON THE RISE'

According to the database of BGB Battalion-2 of Teknaf, around 36.77 lakh yaba pills were recovered and 132 people were arrested by this border force unit in the first eight months of this year.

During this period, 13 people were killed in "gunfights" with the battalion.

Among these recoveries, the highest -- around 8.21 lakh pills -- was reported in March.

But the battalion, only in 40 days since July 31, recovered around 15 lakh yaba pills.

On August 24 alone, Rab-15 seized around 13 lakh pieces of yaba and arrested two Rohingyas from the Bay

in Cox's Bazar.

Sources claimed that one of the prime reasons of these huge recoveries is that the yaba smugglers are coming back after staying out of Teknaf for the last several months or a year.

"These smugglers are now back to their business and have started smuggling yaba again," a source, closely familiar with the smuggling route, told The Daily Star on August 20.

Lt Col Faisal Hasan Khan, commanding officer of BGB battalion-2 of Teknaf, however, said on September 12 that he did not think that the smuggling of yaba has increased.

"It looks almost similar to previous months," he said.

"We are always remaining alert and taking action against narcotics smuggling, adopting a zero tolerance policy," Lt Col Khan told The Daily Star.

He further said they were actually witnessing the use of Rohingya community members as yaba carriers, which is rising rapidly.

"As the Rohingyas are well aware of the routes of Myanmar, the smugglers are using them," he added.

Talking to this newspaper, local sources in Teknaf said the narcotics dealers do not actually bother if any yaba shipment is seized by law enforcers as they are smuggling the drug on credit.

The dealers only need to pay the money to their counterparts in Myanmar after the consignments reach their dens safely, said the sources.

They started to apply this technique last year and now it is very popular among them.

About payment, sources claimed, they use hundi operators to pay the money later.

How hills

FROM PAGE 1

Locals alleged that they patronise the activities in the ward and its adjacent areas.

Refuting the allegation, the councillor said, "In no way I am involved, rather I informed the DoE several times of taking legal actions."

"Hillock owners need plain land to sell or construct houses. They give the task to contractors to cut the hillocks. They ravage the hillocks at nights, sell the soil and even if they are fined, they pay the fine on their own. The hillock owners always stay clean," he said.

Emran Hossain, director of DoE in Sylhet, said though they have limited manpower, they remain vigilant on hillock cutting and are taking action whenever they find such incidents.

"In last one month, we conducted six drives against hillock cutting at different spots, including the Majumdar Tila, and fined those involved in the activities Tk 8.50 lakh," he said, adding that people should inform them if they notice any hillocks are being destroyed.

However, environmental activists claim that such drives and fines will not stop hillock cutting completely.

Abdul Karim Kim, general secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) Sylhet chapter, said, "After hillock cutting, prices of the land increase four to five times higher than normal. Comparing to that, the amount of fine is nothing for these people."

"The will of the DoE is also questionable. It only takes actions when any specific hillock cutting surfaces. They conduct drive, fine some people, arrest labourers sometimes, but the hillock owners remain untouched," he said.

There must be a separate department like forest or haor or river to protect hills and hillocks of the country, Kim urges, saying, "The land department knows which land is classified as hillock in the legal documents."

"The owners who cut hillocks must be identified and punished legally -- that is the way the hillock cutting may be stopped."

Court orders

FROM PAGE 1

(IO) of the case made an appeal to seize the property found during investigation.

Following appeal of the case's IO Riaz Uddin, also ACC's assistant director, the court ordered to freeze movable and immovable property of Chumki, as mentioned in the FIR, until further notice, said ACC lawyer Advocate Kazi Sanawar Hossain Lavlu.

Apart from that, the court also rejected Pradeep's bail prayer placed before court by his lawyer, said ACC public prosecutor Mahmudul Haque.

The court also ordered jail authorities to take necessary steps as per the jail code after his lawyer pleaded for medical treatment and family visitations, he said.

IO Riaz told the Daily Star, "We appealed before court to seize the property after we came to learn that they were trying to hand over their money and property to others."

Lavlu said the property ordered to be confiscated were: a six-storey building owned by Chumki in city's Patharghata, a semi-pacca house, a piece of land in city's Muradpur, a flat in Cox's Bazar, a microbus, a private car and Tk 17.73 lakh in a Basic bank account.

According to the case statement, Chumki showed that her father had given her the six-storey building on August 1, 2013. She has two brothers who did not get any such mentionable property from her father, said the ACC.

Chumki, a housewife, submitted income tax return for the first time in 2013-14 fiscal year. Since then, she has been mentioning that business was her profession.

In her 2013-14 and 2014-15 income tax return, she declared her capital in a commission business as Tk11.2 lakh and income as Tk3.8 lakh.

But no existence of the commission business was found and she could not provide any license or bank statement in this regard.

Chumki also declared earning Tk 1.5 crore from a fish business from 2002 to 2013 and leasing five ponds in Boalkhali in 2002 at Tk 16.5 lakh for ten years.

The couple failed to show any document about the source of Tk 16.5 lakh invested in the fish business.

"It proves that Chumki, in a bid to conceal Pradeep's illegal money, showed a fake fish business. Her income of Tk 1.5 crore from the fish business is not acceptable," the FIR reads.

Analysing documents, the commission also found that Chumki had amassed Tk 4.22 crore immovable property and spent Tk 21.7 lakh as family expenditure.

Yemen rebel attack on Saudi village wounds 5

AFP, Riyadh

A projectile fired by Yemen's Huthi rebels hit a village in Saudi Arabia's southern Jizan province, wounding five civilians, state media reported.

The civilians had been rushed to hospital after suffering "minor injuries" from flying shrapnel, the official Saudi Press Agency reported late Saturday.

DGHS official, wife

FROM PAGE 1

On June 27 last year, the ACC filed two separate cases with ACC Integrated District Office-1 of Dhaka-1.

The first case was filed against Abzal and Rubina on charges of laundering Tk 264 crore worth of money.

The other case was filed against Abzal on charges of laundering Tk 20.74 crore.

Although Abzal was a fourth-grade government employee, his five houses, including one in Uttara, several plots, and a house abroad, were inconsistent with his legal income, said a letter issued by the health ministry on January 13 last year.

The health ministry suspended Abzal on charges of corruption on January 14.

On January 21, Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court ordered confiscation of all properties owned by Abzal and his wife, a stenographer of the Medical Education and Health Manpower Development Project under the DGHS, and the freezing of all their bank accounts.

On March 18, the ACC seized Abzal's five-storey building, Tamanna Villa, located on road 11 in Uttara's sector-13.

SAMRAT CASE

Meanwhile, the ACC has found evidence against expelled Jubo League leader Ismail Chowdhury Samrat, one of the "casino kingpins" in Dhaka, of siphoning off over Tk 200 crore to Singapore and Malaysia, sources said.

He spent most of the money while gambling at casinos, source said.

Source said that between 2011 and 2019, Samrat laundered 3.65 crore Singaporean dollars -- around Tk 226.30 crore. He also laundered another 2 lakh Malaysian ringgit -- around Tk 40 lakh.

On September 13, the the Criminal Investigation Department of police filed a case against Samrat for siphoning off Tk 195 crore to Singapore and Malaysia with the help of Enamul Haque Arman, another leader of the ruling party's youth wing.

In its investigation, the CID found that Samrat, 49, had visited Singapore 35 times, Malaysia thrice, Dubai twice, and Hong Kong once between 2011 to 2019, according to the case statement.

In those eight years, Samrat's associate Arman, 56, also visited Singapore 23 times.

In the FIR, the CID mentioned that Samrat earned money through various illegal activities in Motijheel, Fakirapool, Paltan, and Kakrail areas.

On October 6, 2019, Rapid Action Battalion arrested Samrat, who was the president of Dhaka South unit Jubo League, and Arman, former vice-president of the same unit, from Cumilla after raiding a house near the Indian border.

He came under the spotlight after Rab busted his illegal casino business at different sporting clubs in Dhaka. Following the incident, he was expelled from the Jubo League.

A battle brewing over Hefajat

FROM PAGE 1

Porwar, were seen at Shafi's namaz-e-ajanaza. Jamaat men were seen carrying Shafi's coffin during burial.

Pro-Hefajat Islamic intellectuals have already started campaigning on social media in favour of Hefajat and its 2013 anti-government movement.

Sources in the ruling Awami League and its electoral ally Jatiya Party said they are keeping a close watch on every development at Hathazari madrasa and also their political opponents' efforts to gain Hefajat's support.

Some AL leaders had maintained relations with Shafi after Hefajat changed its stance following its failed movement in 2013, they pointed out.

Shafi, who often drew controversy for opposing women's empowerment and education, passed away on Friday evening, a day after he resigned as the director general of Hathazari madrasa.

He was forced to quit the post he had held since 1986 following an unprecedented student unrest at the madrasa. The unrest was fuelled by Babunagari and several others who were not on good terms with Shafi since he leaned towards the AL after the failed 2013 movement, said Hefajat sources.

Shafi's son Anas Madani, who reportedly has good relations with the AL government, was also removed from the post of assistant director of the madrasa on Wednesday night.

Shafi, who was chairman of the Qawmi Madrasa Education Board, founded Hefajat during the tenure of the AL government in 2009, protesting a draft national women development policy that gives equal inheritance rights to women.

A year later, Hefajat demanded cancellation of a proposed national education policy, saying it has a secular curriculum for schools and colleges.

In 2013, the Islamist outfit emerged as a force, countering the Shahbagh movement, initiated by bloggers and online activists who demanded

death penalty for war criminal Abdul Quader Mollah.

As Hefajat activists turned increasingly violent and kept the capital's Motijheel occupied for nearly 12 hours after their rally there on May 5, 2013, law enforcers swung into action and drove them away.

Things changed in the following years, and Shafi and the AL government got closer. Earlier, Hefajat and its chief had leaned towards the BNP. A faction of the Hefajat, led by Babunagari, was totally against the Hefajat's "soft approach" towards the government, according to several Hefajat leaders.

SHAFI'S SUCCESSOR

Following Shafi's death, there have been a lot of speculations about who would be his successor.

Talking to journalists, Babunagari said, "As Hefajat's secretary general, I will convene a meeting of the organisation's council to elect the new supreme leader. The council will decide on this matter."

"Ahmad Shafi's death is an irreparable loss. But we will try to recover from it. As Shafi's soldiers, we will work following his footsteps," he added.

Asked about Shafi's son Anas Madani's allegation about his links to the student unrest, Babunagari said, "It was an orderly demonstration. I have no involvement in it. I learnt about the demonstration after it started on Wednesday."

INTERIM BODY

The Hathazari madrasa has announced an interim body to run the largest Qawmi madrasa in the country.

At a meeting yesterday, its Shura committee entrusted a group of three with the responsibility of running the madrasa for the next six months. The committee will monitor their activities and decide on the next course of action.

The three are madrasa teachers Maulana Sheikh Ahmed, Mufti Abdus Salam and Maulana Yahya.

'Winter is coming'

FROM PAGE 1

She joined the function through a videoconference from her official residence Gano Bhaban as the representatives of the organisations handed over cheques to PM's Principal Secretary Dr Ahmad Kaikaus at the Prime Minister's Office.

Of them, 34 commercial banks, led by Bangladesh Association of Bank (BAB), provided total Tk 164 crore as donation.

Sheikh Hasina said everyone has been working with utmost sincerity to fight Covid-19 pandemic in the country. "That's why we've been able to face it."

Bangladesh has so far recorded 347,372 cases with 4,913 fatalities. The first cases were reported on March 8 and the first death on March 18. So far, 254,386 patients have recovered, pushing the recovery rate to 73.23 percent.

Currently, there are 88,073 active cases in the country.

Globally, the coronavirus caseload reached 30,673,633 on Sunday, according to Johns Hopkins University (JHU) tally with 955,404 deaths.

Coronavirus cases were first reported in China in December last year. The World Health Organization declared it a pandemic in March.

There is currently no vaccine for coronavirus but a number of promising candidates are in the final stage of trial.

"Want banks to run properly" Talking about the banks, she hinted that the weak banks will be merged following proper assessments, if necessary.

"There are some banks that became very weak. In many cases, merging is essential. In that case, it'll have to be considered which bank is functioning properly or not. It'll be done considering these things. Keep trust [on government] that nothing will be done without consideration [assessment]," she said.

Sheikh Hasina said her government

had taken the decision to permit banks in the private sector and it gave the permission to the highest number of the private banks, which created huge employments and expanded trade and business.

She said her government had taken measures to make the people habituated to the banking system up to the rural level so that they can make transactions using the banking channels.

In this context, the prime minister mentioned that her government created scope for the farmers to open a bank account with Tk 10.

"So, we want that the banks to run properly ... We always consider all of your logical demands that you bring [before me]," she said.

Other organisations that made donations are Food Ministry, Foreign Officers Spouse Association (FOSA), Rajshahi Medical University, Institute of Architects Bangladesh, Bangladesh Judicial Employees Association and Minister Group.

Alongside the cash money, Minister Group provided 100,000 surgical masks.

The 34 banks are -- AB Bank Ltd, Al-Arafah Islami Bank Ltd, Bank Asia Ltd, BRAC Bank Ltd, City Bank Ltd, Dhaka Bank Ltd, Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd, Eastern Bank Ltd, EXIM Bank, First Security Islami Bank Ltd, Islami Bank (Bd) Ltd, Jamuna Bank Ltd, Mercantile Bank Ltd, Midland Bank Ltd, Modhumoti Bank Ltd, Mutual Trust Bank Ltd, National Bank Ltd, NCC Bank Ltd, NRB Bank Ltd, NRB Commercial Bank Ltd, NRB Global Bank Ltd, One Bank Ltd, Padma Bank Ltd, Prime Bank Ltd, Pubali Bank Ltd, SBAC Bank Ltd, Shahjalal Islami Bank Ltd, Social Islami Bank Ltd, Southeast Bank Ltd, Standard Bank Ltd, Trust Bank Ltd, Union Bank Ltd, United Commercial Bank Ltd and Uttara Bank Ltd.

The prime minister thanked the organisations for their contributions to the PM's Relief and Welfare Fund.

SC keeps four

FROM PAGE 1

her lawyer AM Mahub Uddin Khokon told The Daily Star.

Yesterday, a three-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC headed by Justice Muhammad Imman Ali gave the orders after virtually hearing four separate leave to appeal petitions filed by the state seeking stay on the HC orders.

Additional Attorney General Momtaz Uddin Fakir appeared for the state while Mahub represented Khaleda during the virtual proceedings.

The HC will hold hearings on the rules for their disposals, Mahub said, adding that Khaleda is on bail in these cases.

He said Khaleda is accused in 37 cases and she is on bail in 35 and has been convicted in two.

The BNP chairperson was released from jail through an executive order issued by the government on March 25 this year.

Following four separate petitions filed by Khaleda, the HC on different days in 2017 stayed the trial proceedings against her in three separate vandalism and arson cases and a defamation case and also issued four rules asking the government to explain as to why the proceedings of the cases should not be scrapped.

The vandalism and arson cases were filed with Darus Salam Police Station and the defamation case was filed with a Dhaka court after Khaleda made a statement on the number of martyrs of the Liberation War.

The cases were filed during anti-government agitations by BNP-led alliance in 2015.

The defamation case was filed after Khaleda at a discussion on December 21, 2015, at the Institution of Engineers said, "There are controversies over how many were martyred in the Liberation War. There are also many books and documents on the controversies."

Timely action averts fire tragedy at Banani high-rise

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

This could have been another tragedy like last year's FR Tower fire if the situation was not brought under control promptly, fire officials said after dousing the blaze at 22-storey Ahmed Tower yesterday.

The fire originated at the office of Redington (BD) Ltd, which provides IT related services, around 11:34am on the 15th floor of Ahmed Tower, a high-rise next to FR Tower in Dhaka's Banani where a fire claimed 27 lives.

Eight firefighting units doused the fire within an hour, said Saleh Uddin, assistant director at Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence.

"We rushed to the scene very fast with the experience of last year's incident at FR Tower. Fortunately, the fire didn't spread. Otherwise, it could have been another devastating tragedy," he said.

The cause of the fire could not be known immediately. No casualties were reported.

Due to the fire, panic gripped people working at the offices in the building. Many came down to the street.

Witnesses said that the fire did not spread as it was controlled with their fire

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Once a waterlogged waste dumping ground, inset, Abdul Alim playground has become a popular destination for Old Dhaka residents, attracting old and young alike. This much-needed green space is part of a DSCC project to renovate all 31 parks and playgrounds under its jurisdiction.

PHOTO COURTESY: SHATOTTO

A place to breathe

DSCC sprucing up 19 parks, 12 playgrounds; work for 4 already completed, rest by June next year

HELEMUL ALAM

First-grader Hasibur Rahman Anu was elated while playing at the eastern side of the Hazi Abdul Alim playground in Old Dhaka on Saturday.

Nowadays, he often comes here along with his cousin Zunayed, a class-3 student, under the watchful eyes of their parents.

But it was not like this before. Just a few years ago, a large portion of the field used to be occupied by trucks while Old Dhaka locals avoided the place as it was a den for anti-social activities. Many also used the spot as a garbage dumping ground.

The field was renovated and opened in November last year with a complete facelift.

Now, with a big lush green space in its middle, there are separate places designated for children of all age groups to play. Besides, there are walkways around the main playground where different age groups' exercise even at night as the field has sufficient lights and sitting arrangements.

A two-storey building houses a gym and a coffee shop at the north-east corner of the field, which continues to increase people's interest to spend time there with family or friends.

And the good news is that this is not the only field with these features. All the 31 parks and playgrounds under Dhaka South City Corporation are being modernised as part of a project "Jol Sobujer Dhaka".

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO

Subsidise internet for disadvantaged groups

Speakers tell BIGD webinar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a webinar yesterday underscored the need for improving economic conditions and subsidising internet costs for the disadvantaged groups to reduce digital divide.

The webinar, titled "Digital Inclusion Webinar Series: Digital Divide in Rural Bangladesh" was organised by BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD).

A research paper by Professor of Economics at Dhaka University Dr Muhammad Shahadat Hossain Siddiquee and BIGD research associate Md Saiful Islam was presented.

It was based on a survey carried out on 6,500 sample rural households between September and November 2019. The most "digitally literate" individual in a household answered digital literacy questions for the survey.

The research said education plays a vital role on people's internet usage. "The higher

the level of education, more likely of access to internet," reads the research.

The researchers recommended scaling up public access points of internet and ICT programs to bridge the digital divide.

BIGD Executive Director Dr Imran Matin suggested to adopt micro-digitisation strategy to bridge the gap.

Pointing out that women have low access to internet, Mehnaz Rabbani, lead of Research for Policy and Governance (RPG) at BIGD said women are lagging behind due to poor access to internet.

"If the number of female internet users cannot be increased, years of struggle of the government to reduce gender inequality will become futile," she added.

Policy advisor Anir Chowdhury said the use of internet varies from person to person. "A person who needs old age allowance has different kind of demand from internet than a youth has," he said, underscoring the need for creating specific skills for special needs among people.

N'GANJ MOSQUE TRAGEDY

Electrician who 'set up illegal line' held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A Narayanganj court yesterday placed an electrician on a two-day remand after he was arrested the same day in a case filed in connection with the blast at Pashchim Talla Baitus Salat Mosque in Narayanganj that left 33 people dead so far.

Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court placed the arrestee -- Mobarok Hossain (35) -- on remand after he was produced before the court by law enforcers, said Asaduzzaman, inspector of Narayanganj Court Police.

Criminal Investigation Department arrested Mobarok Hossain from Narayanganj Sadar upazila.

CID Inspector Babul Hossain told The Daily Star that during investigation, they found an illegal electricity line in the mosque and the connection was set up by Mobarok, who is not a staff member of the power department.

The CID official said the explosion would not have occurred on September 4 if this illegal line was not there.

According to fire officials, the explosion was caused by the accumulation of leaked gas from an underground Titas Gas pipeline that somehow came in contact with an electric spark.

On Saturday, eight officials of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited, who have been suspended over the blast at the mosque, were arrested by CID.



Rehearsal room now the stage, 20 seats now housefull. This is how Prachyanat, a leading theatre troupe, is staging their plays. PHOTO COURTESY: TOUKIR AHMED TANVEE

Curtains rising, cautiously

Theatre artistes resuming to stage in capital

PRIYANKA CHOWDHURY, Arts & Entertainment

As I was walking into Prachyanat's practice space, with my mask and gloves on, some familiar voices called out my name. For the next few minutes, it felt like I was back to my old theatre-going self.

As I went to the fourth floor, one of the troupe members held an infrared thermometer to my forehead. Along with paper decorations and oil lamps, the troupe was now prepared with disinfectant sprays, shoe covers and face masks.

After five months of stagnancy, they took the challenge of resuming work.

Productions of Prachyanat, a torch-bearer among contemporary theatre groups, offer some much-needed breathing space for Dhaka dwellers, although arranged on a limited scale. What was known to be a houseful show is also going through a massive shift.

They have stepped up their comeback with a full-fledged monthlong theatre festival titled "Mahala Magan" at their rehearsal room in the capital's Kataban. With only 20 audience seats, festival organisers introduced an online ticketing system for the shows.

The pandemic has not only defined a "new normal" for theatre, but has also left its mark on the plays' storylines.

Hundred by Hundred, directed by Saiful Jarnal, for example, narrates the story of a garment factory worker, who began a journey by foot, in response to an unprecedented call from authorities, disregarding health risks of the pandemic — an incident that was not new to the audience who follow the news, but it returned as a reminder through the play.

Mostly, theatre artistes and practitioners attended the programme,

but regular citizens also showed up in small numbers. Among them was Farhana Satu, a professional photographer who watched the show with her friends.

"The production was interesting and so was the following session on mental health by Dr Helal," Farhana said. "They did their best to arrange the show, maintaining health guidelines. However, the seats were too close to each other, which did not meet social distancing requirements. Nonetheless, as an audience member, the show brought about some mental peace for me."

Additional health-safety naturally mean more expenses. And many artistes often say theatre in the country is not economically fruitful to begin with.

Regarding this issue, Jarnal said the amount received from these shows can cover rent of Prachyanat's practice space. With utmost priority to health factors, and trusting that the audience will take necessary precautions, the group wants to continue their programmes.

Similarly, Bangladesh Mahila Samity (BMS) reopened with the play "Lal Jomin" last month. BMS Management Officer Gazi Ibrahim Firoz said they took proper health precautions for the audience.

"We have decreased seats from 16 in a row to seven, to maintain social distancing, and wearing face-masks inside our hall is mandatory," he added. "Occupancy of 50-60 seats is now considered houseful."

Although authorities have given no formal instruction for reopening theatre shows and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is still working on their plan of action, BMS officials claimed that they got approval from Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation to resume work.

Verdict of arms case against Shahed Sept 28

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday fixed September 28 for delivering the judgement of an arms case against Regent Group Chairman Mohammad Shahed on completion of the trial within seven working days.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of Special Tribunal-1 of Dhaka fixed the date after defence lawyers completed their arguments.

During yesterday's hearing, the defence sought acquittal of their client from the case. They told the court that the prosecution has failed to prove the charges brought against him.

Shahed was arrested on July 15 from Sathkira when he was trying to leave the country on a boat.

On July 19, a team of DB police found Shahed's private car in front of a house in Sector-11, in the city's Uttara Paschim area. They then seized a pistol with a round of bullets from the car and later a case under the Arms Act was filed against him.

DB Inspector Md Sairul Islam on July 30 submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka, showing 13 people as prosecution witnesses.

SUBMITTING FAKE DOCS TO SECURE BAIL FOR RAPE CONVICT

HC directs to file criminal case against forgers, including 2 cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has found forgery committed by some people, including two policemen, to secure bail for a rape convict of Jhenidah through making false and manipulated documents and submitting them before this court.

After examining original and forged documents, the court yesterday directed its registrar to file a criminal case against constables Bishwajit alias Babu and Khairul, who were discharging duties in Jhenidah jail, and one Chandali Biswas who sworn the affidavit to file the appeal seeking bail for rape convict Kabir Biswas, who has been sentenced to life imprisonment by the trial court.

Bishwajit has been transferred to Kushtia and Babu is now discharging duties in Jhenidah Jail, Kabir's lawyer Sheikh Atiar Rahman told The Daily Star.

Yesterday, the HC said the investigation officer of the criminal case will implicate others, who will be found involved with the forgery.

The bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman came up with the order during hearing a bail appeal filed by Kabir in the case filed in 2013 for rape under Section 9(1) of

Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain, 2000.

Deputy Attorney General Sarwar Hossain Bappi told The Daily Star that the Jhenidah tribunal on July 8, 2015 convicted Kabir, sentenced him to life imprisonment and fined him Tk 2 lakh for the crime.

The tribunal directed Kabir to give the money to the victim to bring up the disputed child born by Kabir and the victim.

Kabir filed an appeal with the HC, challenging the verdict.

He sought bail from the HC twice, which the HC on January 25 and May 30 in 2018 rejected.

During hearing another bail petition on December 15, 2015, the HC bench of Justice Enayetur and Justice Amir Hossain said this court will consider his bail if he agrees to marry the victim.

Kabir did not agree, DAG Sarwar said.

In this circumstance, Advocate Sheikh Atiar Rahman, a Supreme Court lawyer, appeared for Kabir before the HC bench on September 15 and placed some documents, seeking his bail.

It has been found in the documents submitted by him that Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Tribunal-2 of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

PREDICTED GRADES FOR O, A LEVEL EXAMS

English medium students seek govt intervention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of English medium students formed a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday to seek the government's intervention for the upcoming Ordinary and Advanced Level exams. The students urged authorities concerned to not hold the exams amid the pandemic, as it will put students in severe health risks.

They also urged the government to contact relevant authorities to make sure the students are graded based on their previous results, a process known as "predicted grades".

Earlier, educational boards that arrange the exams globally decided to not hold the exams for the May-June session due to the outbreak. Instead, they prepared results based on predicted grades and previous academic records submitted by schoolteachers.

In light of this, students in Bangladesh demanded the cancellation of the October-November exam session in Bangladesh, and asked for predicted grading instead, as they don't want a gap in their education, they said. The students have so far contacted Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury as well as other officials of the ministry, seeking their intervention.

"We want the government to intervene so that we are given predicted grades," said Nicholas Gomez, an A level examinee. "This is not a difficult task for the boards to accomplish if they have the will for it."

Alongside the human chain, the students had been staging a virtual movement on social media.

Contacted secondary and higher education secretary Mahub Hossain said he is yet to receive any formal request from anyone about it.

However, he said that British Council Bangladesh Director Tom

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Footbridges falling victim to hawkers is nothing new, as pedestrians swerve through vendors without batting an eye. But seeing gas cylinders on the stairs will surely take one aback. This footbridge at the capital's Kakrail acts as storage space for a restaurant underneath. Since they cannot keep the cylinders on the footpath, they chain them up here, but passers-by suffer either way. This photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Ratargul watchtower becomes 'risky', closed off to tourists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A watchtower has become risky only six years after it was constructed right in the middle of the core zone of Ratargul Swamp Forest in Sylhet.

The Forest Department yesterday banned climbing up to the tower for tourists visiting the country's most popular freshwater swamp forest.

Saad Uddin Ahmed, forester of Sylhet Forest Division, said, "It [the watchtower] has been risky for a long time and we earlier put up a signboard instructing that only four to five persons can climb up at a time."

"But, it never worked well; sometimes ten times of the instructed number of tourists climb up to the tower on a regular basis, making it vulnerable," he told this newspaper.

"That's why we have closed the watchtower for tourists and the order will be effective until further notice," Saad added.

Ratargul Swamp Forest -- sprawling 504.50 acres of land in Gowainghat upazila of the district -- was declared as "Reserve Forest" in 1973 and went into oblivion for decades.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Nirmul Committee collects 10,000 Rohingya testimonies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekattorer Ghatk Dalal Nirmul Committee President Shahriar Kabir yesterday said they have collected 10,000 testimonies of Rohingya people.

"Gradually, we are going to publish all these testimonies in our journal," he said, terming the persecuted Myanmar nationals "victims of genocide".

He was addressing an international conference held virtually. The committee, a pro-Liberation War platform, organised the conference on "Miseries of Rohingyas and refugees of other countries across the globe: Crisis of humanity".

He called upon the United Nations to take steps for a third country relocation of Rohingyas. The UN Human Rights Commission has already arranged this for Bhutanese refugees, he commented.

British human rights activist Julian Francis said historically, the international communities have neglected the situation with Rohingyas for decades. He said Muslims of Myanmar's Rakhine state were forced out even in the late 18th century. "So, the whole problem has been going on for a long time."

On legal aspect of the Rohingya crisis, Barrister Tureen Afroz, a former prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal, said if Myanmar has committed genocide, there should be some sort of accountability.

Justice Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Kazi Mukul of Nirmul Committee, among others, addressed the conference. Representatives of different refugee communities and nationals of Syria, Palestine, and Rwanda, among other countries, took part.

7 held with 5 lakh yaba pills at Bay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Coast Guard arrested seven people and seized five lakh yaba pills early yesterday in a drive in the Bay of Bengal, 30 nautical miles from Teknaf.

Tipped-off, a team of the coast guard conducted the drive around 1:30am and recovered the pills from a fishing boat and arrested the seven, said Lt Hayat Ibna Siddique, media officer of coast guard. It is suspected that the drug was being smuggled on the sea route from Myanmar to Bangladesh.

The arrestees are Mohorrom Ali (44), Abdul Shukkur (26), Amanullah (28), Nurul Alam (38), Abdul Monnaf (35), Jahid Hossain (33), and Abdul Pedan (22).

All the arrestees hail from Teknaf. They were handed over to Teknaf Police Station.

On Saturday, coast guard seized 1.40 lakh yaba tablets from a boat in Jhaubon area near Rejukhal estuary in Ramu upazila of Cox's Bazar district.

Pink City partners up with Duke of Edinburgh foundation

CITY DESK

Pink City Home Owner Co-Operative Society Limited have signed an MoU with The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Foundation Bangladesh at a ceremony yesterday.

Dr Sheikh Faridul Islam, President of Pink City, and Md Khalid Shahrir, Programme Manager of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Foundation Bangladesh signed on behalf of their respective organisations, says a press release.

Through the agreement Pink City becomes the first Residential Community Partner of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award by making recognised award programme available to its youth residents, the press release said.

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is one of the leading non-formal education programmes operating in 130 countries and territories including Bangladesh. It offers unique opportunities to youth aged from 14-24 to discover their hidden talents and help them prepare for the future.

ABRAR FAHAD MURDER CASE Trial deferred to Oct 5

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday deferred to October 5 the trial of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) student Abrar Fahad murder case against 25 accused as the complainant was unwell.

Judge Abu Zafar Md Kamruzzaman of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 of Dhaka fixed the date following a petition from the prosecution.

The prosecution said Md Barkatullah, father of the victim and also the complainant, have been suffering from jaundice. So, the hearing should be adjourned, the prosecution added.

During yesterday's hearing, the complainant was present in the court, but he was not in a position to give deposition, while 22 accused, now in jail, were produced before the court.

On October 7 last year, Abrar, a second-year student of Buet, was beaten to death by a group of Buet unit Chhatra League men in a dormitory.

Barkatullah filed a murder case on October 7 with Chawkbazar Police Station.

The incident triggered a firestorm of protests on campuses across the country. Many took to social media to demand justice for Abrar.

Amid protests, Buet authorities on October 11 banned all political activities on the campus and suspended 19 students, mostly leaders of the university's BCL unit who have been made accused in the case.

Eight of the accused gave their confessional statements before magistrates narrating the horrifying torture during investigation on different dates last year.

Inspector Md Wahiduzzaman of Detective Branch of police submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court in Dhaka against 25 Buet students on November 13 last year.

On September 15, the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 of Dhaka framed charges against all 25 accused.

Three other accused -- Mustaba Rafid, Muhammad Morshed-Uz-Zaman Mondol alias Jishan and Ehtashamul Rabbi Tanim -- have been absconding.

HC directs

FROM PAGE 3

Jhenidah on September 16, 2019 sentenced Kabir to seven years' imprisonment considering his age (65 years), and life imprisonment to three others under Section 9(1) of Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000.

If an accused is found guilty under this section, he will be sentenced to life imprisonment and if he is not found guilty he will be acquitted, but there is no provision for sentencing to seven years' imprisonment, DAG Sarwar said.

He said a single accused is tried and punished under section 9(1), but it has been said in the judgement submitted by lawyer Sheikh Atriar that four accused have been convicted and sentenced.

There is no Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Tribunal-2 in Jhenidah, he said, adding that Kabir was 32 years' old when Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Tribunal of Jhenidah delivered verdict on July 8, 2015.

The HC on September 15 called for the

lower court records and fixed yesterday for further hearing.

"Meantime, I talked to the authorities concerned of Jhenidah court and found that Sheikh Atriar Rahman has submitted fake, false, fictitious, manipulated and procured documents to the High Court..." DAG Sarwar said.

He said Sheikh Atriar yesterday offered unconditional apology to the HC and sought retirement from the case, which the HC accepted.

Sheikh Atriar told this newspaper that constable Bishwajit supplied fabricated documents to his clerk Sohel Rana for securing Kabir's bail.

"I had doubts about the documents and my clerk and son went to Jhenidah court to inquire. After examining those, I sought retirement from the case. The HC granted my prayer and asked me to cooperate with the investigation officer," he said.

Kabir, who is now in Jhenidah jail, cannot get released from jail, he said.

Ratargul

FROM PAGE 3

After a few media reports published in 2012, the forest caught tourists' attention and thousands of people started visiting the spot every year to enjoy its unique biodiversity.

The increasing number of tourists poses inevitable risk to the forest and the environmentalists started protesting, but the Forest Department started cashing in on the situation.

To promote tourism, the department constructed the watchtower and several other structures in the forest at Tk 90.62 lakh, according to official records.

Anis Mahmud, an organiser of Bhoomishontan, a Sylhet-based green organisation, said, "Since the very beginning, we protested the Forest Department's decision to set up the watchtower in the core zone of the forest without consulting with experts."

"Now, imposing a ban on climbing up it proves that their decision was completely wrong and meant for personal benefits," he said.

Forester Saad Uddin Ahmed said, "We will be seeking attention of the higher authorities so that they consult with engineers."

"We think, after repair or reconstruction, it can be reopened for tourists," the forester added.

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Two Building (each 6 Storiad@ 90,000sqft) total 1,80,000sqft, Land 5.50 bigha with Electricity /Gas/Water Facility. Both Building Accord Approved with Full Compliance. Presently Garments Factory running at Dhaka Road, Vogra before Gazipur Chowrasta.
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English

FROM PAGE 3

Miscioscia met with him yesterday and discussed different aspects of the upcoming exams.

"He (Tom Miscioscia) said if anyone does not want to sit for the upcoming exams, they can take it later," Mahub said. "There will no predicted grades for the exams," he added.

Two UK boards, Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE) and Pearson's Edexcel, arrange O and Level exams internationally. British Council Bangladesh administers the exams in the country. English-medium students can sit for these exams, either through schools or as private candidates. O-Level is equivalent to Secondary School Certificate of the national curriculum, and A-Level to Higher Secondary School Certificate.

A-level exams under Cambridge are scheduled to start from October 1, and from October 5 under Pearson. Pearson's O-level exams are set to start from November 2 and Cambridge's from November 5.

Timely action

FROM PAGE 3

extinguishers immediately. Fire fighters broke all windows of the floor so that smoke could come out.

A probe committee will be formed to identify the cause, the fire official said. Iftekhar Hossain Khan, country manager of Redington (BD) Ltd, told The Daily Star that their office was closed for last several months and they were about to start their operations from today. "We don't yet know how the fire originated. Fire officials are inspecting," he said.

On March 27 last year, 26 people were killed and more than 70 others were injured in a fire at FR Tower.

BFC
Biman Flight Catering Centre বিমান ফ্লাইট ক্যাটারিং সেন্টার

Invitation for Tender No. 30/2020

01	Agency	Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd.
02	Invitation for	Appointment of Airlines Caterer at Chattogram (CGP) Biman Station on COVID 19 situation period. The following services are required to be provided: a) PAX Lunch/dinner, all crew meals to be provided as per configuration of B-777-300ER, B-787-800ER etc. Shah Amanat International Airport, Chattogram. b) Airlines catering equipments washing charge etc. (Details in tender schedule).
03	Yearly Flight Qty	Yearly 160 flight ex-Chattogram (estimated).
04	Invitation Ref.	30.34.2600.063.50.452.19 Date: 30-10-2019
05	Tender document selling date	From 22-09-2020 to 13-10-2020 (During office hours).
06	Tender closing date and time	Date: 14-10-2020 Time: 12:00 Hrs BST
07	Tender opening date and time	Date: 14-10-2020 Time: 15:00 Hrs BST
08	Selling address of schedule (Dhaka)	a. Manager Finance, Biman Flight Catering Centre, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka. b. Manager Cash & Banking, Balaka Bhaban, Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd, Dhaka. c. Manager Finance, Chattogram Shah Amanat International Airport, Chattogram.
09	Receiving tender document	a. BFC Main Security Gate, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka. b. Biman Balaka Bhaban, Security Counter Gate (Ground Floor), Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka.
10	Price of tender document	BDT 2,000.00 (two thousand) only per set (non-refundable).
11	1) Location 2) Tender security amount (Tk) (refundable) 3) Contract period	1) BFC/Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka. 2) BDT 7,50,000.00 (seven lac fifty thousand) only (refundable) 3) 01 (one) year (COVID 19 situation period)
12	Procuring entity & fund	Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd, Biman, Head Office, Balaka Bhaban, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka, Biman own fund.
13	Official inviting tender	General Manager, BFC, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka. Phone: 880-2-8901760-64 Ext-30 Fax: 880-2-8901638.
14	The tender schedule and other related information will also be available in Biman website: www.biman-airlines.com for ready reference.	

GD-1489 General Manager, BFC

BIRDEM GENERAL HOSPITAL
(An Enterprise of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh)
122 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.
☎ 58616641-50, 9661551-60 Fax: 880-2-9677772

INVITATION FOR RE-TENDER

Invitation Ref. & Date : BIRDEM/Purchase/10-Group (Medicine & MSR Items)/2020/02 Dated : 20 September 2020

01.	Name of Works	Supply of Medicine & MSR items for BIRDEM General Hospital for the year 01.01.2021 - 30.06.2022																										
02.	Details of Work	Group-01: Medicine. Group-06: Stationery & other Items. Group-02: Surgical Items. Group-07: Crockery's & Miscellaneous Items. Group-03: Linen. Group-08: Hardware & Sanitary Items. Group-04: Gauge-Bandage, Dressing & related items. Group-09: Electro Mechanical items. Group-05: Chemical & Reagents. Group-10: Cleaning Materials.																										
03.	Procurement Method	Open Tender Method (OTM)																										
04.	Source of fund	BIRDEM General Hospital																										
05.	Name, designation & address of official inviting tender	Director General, BIRDEM General Hospital, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000.																										
06.	Name & address of the office selling tender documents	Procurement Section, Room: 230, 1 st floor of OPD Building, BIRDEM General Hospital, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000.																										
07.	Date of selling of tender documents	Tender documents will be available from 23 September 2020 to 18 October 2020 on all working days (09.00 am to 01.00 pm).																										
08.	Tender closing date	20 October 2020 (From 08.00 AM to 12.00 PM)																										
09.	Tender opening date	20 October 2020 at 12.30 Noon (In presence of the tenderers or their authorized agent, if anybody available)																										
10.	Price of tender document (For each Group)	Group: 1, 2 & 5 = 5,000/ (Five Thousand) Taka Only. (Each Group) Group: 3, 4, 8 & 9 = 2,000/ (Two Thousand) Taka Only. (Each Group) Group: 6, 7 & 10 = 1,000/ (One Thousand) Taka Only. (Each Group)																										
11.	Tender Security	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name of Group</th> <th>Tender Security Amount (BDT)</th> <th>Name of Group</th> <th>Tender Security Amount (BDT)</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Group-01</td> <td>1,00,000.00</td> <td>Group-06</td> <td>10,000.00</td> <td rowspan="5">Said amount for each group have to be deposited in the form of Demand Draft or Pay-order from any local commercial bank in favor of BIRDEM General Hospital.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group-02</td> <td>50,000.00</td> <td>Group-07</td> <td>10,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group-03</td> <td>30,000.00</td> <td>Group-08</td> <td>20,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group-04</td> <td>30,000.00</td> <td>Group-09</td> <td>20,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group-05</td> <td>50,000.00</td> <td>Group-10</td> <td>10,000.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name of Group	Tender Security Amount (BDT)	Name of Group	Tender Security Amount (BDT)	Comments	Group-01	1,00,000.00	Group-06	10,000.00	Said amount for each group have to be deposited in the form of Demand Draft or Pay-order from any local commercial bank in favor of BIRDEM General Hospital.	Group-02	50,000.00	Group-07	10,000.00	Group-03	30,000.00	Group-08	20,000.00	Group-04	30,000.00	Group-09	20,000.00	Group-05	50,000.00	Group-10	10,000.00
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Group-04	30,000.00	Group-09	20,000.00																									
Group-05	50,000.00	Group-10	10,000.00																									
12.	Eligibility of tenderers	a. The tenderers should be manufacturer or their authorized supplier/distributor/dealer or seller of the items. b. Each group & item of the lot shall be evaluated separately. c. The tenderers should have valid & updated trade license, TIN, VAT & Income Tax Certificate.																										
13.	Detail specifications, terms & conditions, warranty & After sales services are enumerated in the tender schedule.																											
14.	BIRDEM authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.																											

Note: In case of holiday or any unavoidable circumstances last date of dropping & opening will be the next working day.

A. Chowdhury
Director General
BIRDEM General Hospital

বাংলাদেশ হাউস বিল্ডিং ফাইন্যান্স কর্পোরেশন
সদর দফতর, ২২, পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা।

পুরাতন গাড়ী বিক্রয়ের পুনঃ টেন্ডার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ হাউস বিল্ডিং ফাইন্যান্স কর্পোরেশনের নিম্নবর্ণিত পেট্রোল/সি.এন.জি চালিত ১(এক) টি মাইক্রোবাস "যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে" তার ভিত্তিতে ক্রয় করতে ইচ্ছুক প্রতিষ্ঠান/ক্রেতা সাধারণের নিকট হতে নিম্নোক্ত শর্তাধীনে সীলগালা বন্ধনামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক নম্বর	নিবন্ধন নম্বর	ব্রাউ/ডেইরির সন	গাড়ীর ধরণ/আসন সংখ্যা	ইঞ্জিন নম্বর	চেসিস নম্বর	সিসি	পরিদর্শনের স্থান
১।	ঢাকা মেট্রো-৮-৫৩-৩২৭৫	নিশান আরতান (জাপান অরিজিন), ২০০৯ ইং	মাইক্রোবাস ১৫ (পনের) আসন	QR25-910411A	JN1TA4 E25ZO-011534	২৫০০	বিএইচবিএফসি ভবন, ২২, পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০।

- অগ্রহী টেন্ডার দাতাগণ নিজ দায়িত্বে এবং খরচে উপরেউল্লিখিত ঠিকানায় রক্ষিত মাইক্রোবাসটি (কাগজপত্রসহ) আগামী ১৩.১০.২০২০ খ্রিঃ তারিখ রোজ মঙ্গলবার পর্যন্ত প্রতি কর্ম দিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে (সকাল ১০:০০ টা হতে বিকাল ৪:০০ টা পর্যন্ত) পরিদর্শন করতে পারবেন।
- সাদা কাগজে বা লেটার হেড প্যাডে গাড়ীর রোজিট্রেশন নম্বরসহ দর উল্লেখপূর্বক টেন্ডার দাখিল করতে হবে এবং সীলমোহরকৃত কভার/ধামের উপরে টেন্ডার বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত গাড়ীর নম্বর লিখতে হবে।
- টেন্ডারের সাথে অবশ্যই "বাংলাদেশ হাউস বিল্ডিং ফাইন্যান্স কর্পোরেশন", সদর দফতর, ২২, পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০ এর অনুকূলে গাড়ীর জন্য দরপত্র উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের উপর ৭% হারে আর্নেস্টম্যানি যে কোন তফসিলি ব্যাংকের ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে দাখিল করতে হবে।
- টেন্ডারের দরদাতা ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের পূর্ণাঙ্গ নাম, ঠিকানা এবং টেলিফোন/মোবাইল নম্বর (যদি থাকে) উল্লেখ পূর্বক টেন্ডার দাতার স্বাক্ষর ব্যবহার করতে হবে। এছাড়া উল্লিখিত দর অংকে এবং কথায় সুস্পষ্টভাবে উল্লেখ করতে হবে। অসমাপ্ত, কাটাকাটি, ঘষামাজা বা একাধিক লেখা সম্বলিত টেন্ডার গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
- যে কোন অগ্রহী ক্রেতা গাড়ী কেনার জন্য টেন্ডার দাখিল করতে পারবেন।
- সীল মোহরকৃত টেন্ডার নিম্নলিখিত ঠিকানাসমূহে রক্ষিত যে কোন একটি টেন্ডার বাজে আগামী ১৪.১০.২০২০ খ্রিঃ তারিখ রোজ বুধবার সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা হতে ০২.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে দাখিল করা যাবে। ঐ দিনই সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ ঠিকানায় বিকাল ২.৩০ মিনিটে উপস্থিত টেন্ডারদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) টেন্ডার বাজে প্রাণ টেন্ডারগুলো খোলা হবে।

বিএইচবিএফসি, সাধারণ সেবা বিভাগ, বিএইচবিএফসি ভবন, ২২ তলা, ২২, পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা।	বিভাগীয় কমিশনারের কার্যালয়, ঢাকা বিভাগ, কমিশনার বিল্ডিং, সেকেন্ড বাগিচা, ঢাকা।
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- কৃতকার্য দরদাতার নামে কার্যাদেশ জারীর ৭(সাত) দিনের মধ্যে টেন্ডারে উদ্ধৃত দরের (গাড়ীর মূল্য) সম্পূর্ণ মূল্য এবং উক্ত মূল্যের উপর প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে সরকারী ভ্যাট, ট্যাক্স ও অন্যান্য সরকারী কর (যদি থাকে) বাংলাদেশ হাউস বিল্ডিং ফাইন্যান্স কর্পোরেশন, সদর দফতর, ২২, পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০ এর অনুকূলে পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট এর মাধ্যমে সাধারণ সেবা বিভাগে জমা দিতে হবে। সরকারী ভ্যাট, ট্যাক্স ও অন্যান্য সরকারী কর (যদি থাকে) পরবর্তীতে অত্র কর্পোরেশন কর্তৃক বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকে চালানোর মাধ্যমে পরিশোধ করা হবে। গাড়ীর উদ্ধৃত সম্পূর্ণ মূল্য এবং প্রযোজ্য সরকারী ভ্যাট, ট্যাক্স ও অন্যান্য সরকারী কর পরিশোধ করার পর কার্যাদেশ উল্লিখিত নির্ধারিত দিনের মধ্যে নিজ ব্যয়ে ও দায়িত্বে বর্তমান অবস্থান হতে গাড়ী ডেলিভারী নিতে হবে। অনাধার্য জমানাত বাজেয়াপ্ত হবে।
- অকৃতকার্য দাতাদের আর্নেস্টম্যানি যথানিয়মে ফেরত দেয়া হবে।
- বিএইচবিএফসি কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন বা সকল টেন্ডার গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন।
- যে কোন বিষয়ে কোন প্রকার আপত্তি/জটিলতা দেখা দিলে কর্পোরেশন কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সিদ্ধান্তই কার্যকর হবে।

(মোঃ গোলাম মোস্তফা)
বিভাগীয় প্রধান (অতিরিক্ত দায়িত্ব)
সাধারণ সেবা বিভাগ



Meraz and his friends with tree saplings near the bank of the Karatoa river in Bogura.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Meraz on a mission

The student planted 2,100 saplings in Bogura's 12 upazilas while his university remained closed due to the outbreak of Covid-19

MD MIZANUR RAHMAN HIMADRI

There are some who complain about anything. And there are some who make the best use of any situation.

Abul Bashar Meraz definitely falls in the latter category.

When the outbreak of Covid-19 forced resident students to return to their homes after their educational institutions closed down, Meraz also left Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU), where he is a master's student, for his home in Nashipur village Bogura's Gabtoli upazila.

During almost six months of his stay-at-home, he did not just confine himself to his own comfort, but chose to do something worthwhile for the community. He made quite an impact among inhabitants of 12 upazilas in the district during this time by planting 2,100 tree saplings.

Between June till mid-August, Meraz, with the help of several of his neighbourhood friends, also students at different universities, planted saplings of various timber, fruit and medicinal trees at as many as 21 locations in the upazilas.

Villager Sohel Rana, from Kollapara in Kahalu upazila, said, "A few months back, a university student came here one day and he planted tree saplings alongside a road and different other open places in the village. The rural road has now turned green -- as if my village has once again regained its life amid the pandemic."

Appreciating the initiative, Abdullah al Fattah, from Gabtoli upazila, said as a means to protect nearby areas from erosion, Meraz and his friends also planted trees on the banks of the Jamuna,

Karatoa, Ichhamothi and Bangalee rivers in Bogura.

Other places they planted saplings include Sabgram road in Bogura Sadar, Bijoynagar in Sherpur, Lekurhaat in Gabtoli, Rahimabad in Shahjahanpur, Bererbari in Dhunat, Pathanpara in Sonatola, Talore rail station in Dupchanchia and a government primary school in Nandigram.

Explaining the motivation behind his mission of planting trees at so many places, Meraz said when a paved road near his house started to crumble during the monsoon rain of June, he realised that the road would not get as damaged if it had trees on its sides.

Besides, "tree is our true friend as it's the primary provider of oxygen [in the atmosphere] and supply of which is crucial for Covid-19 patients. So, everyone, especially students and the young generation, should come forward and plant trees across the country for a green Bangladesh," he added.

Imbued with the motivation, Meraz and his friends then started planting saplings along the road in his village and took on the mission to protect other vulnerable areas, especially roads and river banks, in the district by doing the same.

Meraz first put down the Tk 5,000 that he had saved up from his pocket money. Others soon started to contribute, with cash or saplings, for the cause after seeing his post on his Facebook account.

The team of Meraz and friends do not just finish their duties by planting the saplings only. They assign local volunteers who look after the young trees.

TORTURE ON BOY Restaurant owner's brother arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Police arrested the brother of a restaurant owner in connection with a case for torturing a 13-year-old employee in Kurigram's Rajibpur upazila on Thursday.

The incident took place at Sayeem Hotel in Machh Hati area around 10:30pm.

Police said Mamota Begum, mother of the teenage victim, Sagar Hossain of Joyanchar village under Dangdhara union in Jamalpur's Dewanganj upazila, filed a case with Rajibpur Police Station against restaurant owner Sayeem Hossain and his brother Shafi Alam in connection with the incident.

Officer in Charge (OC) of Rajibpur Police Station Nabiul Hasan said, being informed by the locals, police rescued Sagar and handed him over to his family through a local NGO, Department of Social Welfare.

They also arrested Shafi from the spot, but the restaurant owner Sayeem managed to escape the arrest, added the OC.

Quoting locals, police said Sagar was absent in his work on Wednesday due to illness.

But, owner Sayeem became furious when the boy joined his work on Thursday and demanded his arrears of previous one week.

At one stage, Sayeem and Shafi tied the boy to a pole inside the restaurant's kitchen and tortured him mercilessly.

1,500 marginalised people receive govt grants in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A total of 1500 marginalised people in Lalmonirhat district have recently received financial grants from the government's social welfare department. Each of them in five upazilas and one municipality of the district has received Tk 18,000 financial grant. The local administration has handed over the government grants to the people of the marginalised communities to increase their work efficiency.

These marginalised communities include Rabidas (cobbler), Narosundar (barber), cottage artisans and potters in different areas. These people from different villages in the district struggle to survive.

Premchand Rabidas of Bhadai area in Aditmari upazila said he is very happy to receive the government grant amid the pandemic. With the money, he will repair his roadside

shop. He will also buy various items used in sewing shoes with the amount.

Dhaneswar Chandra Rabidas from Kalmati area in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila said the Tk 18,000 government grant would help them a lot in the crisis time. He would repair his shop and buy some shoe accessories with the money.

"Our income has come down due to coronavirus outbreak. The government grant will really help us financially in the challenging time," he said.

Kohinur Islam, owner of a barber shop in Dalpatti area of Lalmonirhat town, said he could not repair his shop due to lack of money. He has recently received Tk 18,000 financial grant from the government's social welfare department. He will renovate the shop with the money.

Fani Chandra Das, who is dependent on bamboo and cane work

at Mahishkocha village in Aditmari upazila, said he lost his capital during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fani added that there was no money to buy bamboo. He is going to start a new business after getting the government grant in the crisis time.

"I got the opportunity to make a living by buying bamboo and cane with the grant money," he said.

MA Matin, deputy director (DD) of the Lalmonirhat district social welfare department, told The Daily Star that the government has given the financial grants to marginalised people to improve their work skill.

The government has been assisting marginalised people to increase their income, he added.

They will keep vigilance on those marginalised people who have received the government grants, said the DD.



A woman from marginalised community expresses her happiness after getting Tk 18,000 financial grant in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

TORTURED BY ADDICT HUSBAND Housewife lands in Rangpur hospital



Severely beaten by her husband, victim Parvin Akhter is now undergoing treatment at Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

PHOTO: STAR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Brutally tortured by her drug addict husband, a newlywed housewife is groaning with severe pain at Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH) with injuries all over her body, including both hands and legs.

The incident took place in Palli Bidyut area under Rahimanpur union in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila on Friday night.

The victim, Parvin Akhter, 24, daughter of Shafiqul Islam of Malancha village in Baliadangi upazila, was married to Nur Islam, a resident of Palli Bidyut area in Sadar upazila, only a couple of months ago.

Being informed by the villagers, police raided the village the same night and detained Nur around 11:30pm.

Medical Officer at Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital Sakib Ibne Abdullah said victim Parvin was beaten mercilessly with an iron like object and her body bore marks of injuries all over including both the hands and legs.

After conducting X-ray it would be clear whether there is any fracture, added the doctor.

Before leaving for RMCH for better treatment, Parvin told this correspondent at Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital on Friday midnight that she was married to Nur just eight months ago.

Soon after the marriage, Parvin came to know that her husband is a drug addict and he often used to torture her when she protested him, she said.

Parvin said she went to her parental house on Thursday and after returning to her in-laws' house on Friday afternoon she noticed that Nur had already taken drugs and was behaving abnormally.

Meanwhile, soon after reaching her in-laws' house Nur forcibly took her in a room, locked the door from inside and started beating her mercilessly with an iron rod, leaving her seriously injured, she added.

Hearing cry for help, her in-laws entered the room by breaking open the door and rescued her.

They took injured Parvin to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital, where the doctors gave her primary treatment, before referring her to RMCH.

While talking to this correspondent, Nur's niece Mim said her drug addict uncle beat his wife mercilessly with an iron rod and left her severely injured. They took injured Parvin to RMCH as per the doctor's advice, she added.

Officer in Charge of Sadar Police Station Tanvirul Islam said after the incident they raided the village and detained Nur from there.

Thakurgaon Senior Judicial Magistrate Ariful Islam sent Nur to jail when police produced him before his court on Saturday evening, after victim's father filed a case with Thakurgaon Sadar Police Station the same afternoon.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department
Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Crisis Response Project
Workshop Bhaban (Level-3), Agargaon
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.0000.954.11.002.2020.562;

Date: 17-09-2020

Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) (Consulting Services – Firms Selection [International])

Country: Bangladesh

Name of Project: Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Crisis Response Project (EMCRP)

Assignment Title: Consultancy Services for Feasibility Study of Resilient Infrastructure Building Project (RIBP).

Reference No. (as per Procurement Plan): EMCRP/AF/FS/87

Grant No.: IDA-D4190

The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received grant from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank Group toward the cost of the Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Crisis Response Project (EMCRP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the consulting services of Feasibility Study of Resilient Infrastructure Building Project (RIBP).

The consulting services ("the Services") include: a) Development and updating of database of Disaster Shelters Systems (DSS) specially related in flood prone areas; (b) Identification, prioritization and screening of vulnerable areas in Bangladesh due to flood risk and interventions required for safe refuge of people and their cattle during flood; (c) Finalizing project interventions & site selection; (d) Prepare preliminary design of project interventions with estimate(e) feasibility study of the Project; (f) Prepare Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Resettlement Polity Framework (RPF), Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Labor Management Procedure (LMP) and other necessary ES documents complying with World Bank and GoB's all safeguards requirements; (g) Prepare detailed designs and bidding documents for first two packages of works with estimated cost of about US\$50 million. The duration of the assignment will be 8 months. The assignment is expected to commence on March 2021.

The detailed Draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found in the following address and website: www.lged.gov.bd.

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:

1. General experience of the firms;
2. Experience in similar assignments of comparable size, complexity and technical specialty; and
3. Financial soundness, appropriate personnel, logistics.

Key Experts will not be evaluated and CVs need not to be submitted at the shortlisting stage.

Consultants are requested to submit at least the following supporting documents in support of the abovementioned criteria: (a) Registration documents of the firm(s); (b) JV agreement/letter of intent (if applicable); (c) Firm's brochure; (d) Audited financial reports for last 3 years; (e) appropriate personnel & logistics; (f) records of similar experience (including nature, contract price, total input in terms of man month, employer, funding agency(s), location of services etc.).

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018 ("Procurement Regulations") setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected. In the case of an association (JV or Sub-consultancy), all members of such "association" should have real and well-defined inputs to the assignment and in such "association" it is preferable to limit the total number of firms to a maximum of 3.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours from 0900 to 1700 hours local time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below in person, or by mail or by email by 17.00 local time (GMT+6 hours) on or before October 15, 2020. In case of hard copy one original and three copies should be submitted.

Javed Karim

Project Director

Phone: 8143334

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GD-1485

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GD-1483

Envelope with 'ricin' sent to White House: reports

US authorities have intercepted an envelope addressed to US President Donald Trump that contained a substance identified as the poison ricin, US media reported Saturday. The letter was discovered earlier this week and did not reach the White House, according to the New York Times and CNN. The Times said it was believed that the letter was mailed from Canada. Mail addressed to the White House is first inspected and sorted in depots just outside Washington. Ricin, which is produced by processing castor beans, is lethal even in minute doses if swallowed, inhaled or injected, causing organ failure. It has no known antidote.

Afghan airstrikes kill '12 civilians, 40 Taliban fighters'

At least 12 civilians were killed and more than 10 others injured on Saturday in twin airstrikes on a Taliban base in the northeastern Afghan province of Kunduz, a provincial official said. Defence ministry officials in Kabul, who said more than 40 Taliban fighters had been killed in the strikes, did not confirm any civilian casualties. They said an investigation was underway into the incident which comes as the warring sides hold peace talks. The Taliban issued a statement accusing Afghan forces of killing at least 40 civilians in the airstrikes. The headline militant group did not comment on casualties among their fighters.

Prosecute 'war criminal' Maduro: Colombia president

Colombia's President Ivan Duque called Saturday for Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro to be prosecuted as a "war criminal" in a joint news conference with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Duque spoke as Pompeo rounded off a three-day tour of Venezuela's neighbors designed to increase pressure on the socialist leader to leave power. Duque, a key US ally in the region, said a UN report this week showed "that this is a regime behind violations of human rights that are systematic, and that the head of this dictatorship is a war criminal and the international community must put an end to the situation." The 411-page UN Human Rights Council report accused Maduro and his inner circle of being responsible for probable crimes against humanity. Caracas dismissed the report as "riddled with falsehoods."

Taiwan president says drills show China threat to region

Two days of Chinese military aircraft approaching Taiwan demonstrate that Beijing is a threat to the entire region and have shown Taiwanese even more clearly the true nature of China's government, President Tsai Ing-wen said yesterday. Multiple Chinese aircraft flew across the mid-line of the Taiwan Strait and into Taiwan's air defence identification zone on Friday and Saturday, causing Taiwan to scramble jets to intercept. China claims Taiwan as its own territory. The exercises took place as US Undersecretary for Economic Affairs Keith Krach was in Taipei, the most senior State Department office to come in four decades.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS, NDTV



Student leader Panusaya Sithijirawattankul hands over a letter to Royal Guard police, with demands for reforming the monarchy, during a mass rally to call for the ouster of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha's government and reforms in the monarchy in Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Thailand 'belongs to the people'

Protesters defy monarchy with 'People's Plaque' as movement intensifies

AFP, Bangkok

Thousands of protesters cheered as activists installed a plaque in Bangkok Sunday declaring that Thailand "belongs to the people" -- the boldest show of defiance in a youth-led movement which is questioning the unassailable monarchy's role in the country.

Thailand has seen near-daily protests for the past two months led by student activists calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha, a former army chief who masterminded the 2014 coup.

Demonstrators spent Saturday rallying in Bangkok's historic Sanam Luang field next to the Grand Palace, where organisers took a stronger line on reform, calling for the royal family to stay out of the kingdom's politics.

Authorities said the demonstration drew 18,000, though AFP reporters on the ground estimated a 30,000-strong crowd at its peak -- making it the largest such gathering Thailand has seen since the 2014 coup.

Yesterday at dawn, student activists installed a commemorative "People's Plaque" in Sanam Luang field.

"Down with feudalism, long live the people," shouted protest organiser Parit Chiwarak to the cheering crowd.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Student leaders install a plaque declaring "This country belongs to the people" near the Grand Palace, Bangkok, yesterday.

The new plaque states the date Sept 20, 2020, followed by the proclamation: "The people have expressed the intention that this country belongs to the people, and not the king."

The movement is pushing frank questioning of the royal family's role into the public -- once a taboo topic due to Thailand's draconian royal defamation laws.

The plaque references the original brass one embedded for decades in the ground of Bangkok's Royal Plaza, which commemorated the end of royal absolutism in 1932.

But it mysteriously disappeared in 2017 -- after King Maha Vajiralongkorn took power following the death of his father -- replaced with one bearing a reminder for Thais to remain loyal to the "nation, religion, king".

The largely leaderless youth-organised movement, partly inspired by Hong Kong's pro-democracy protests, is calling for Prayut's government to be dissolved, a rewrite of the 2017 military-scripted constitution, and for authorities to stop "harassing" political opponents.

Some factions within the movement have also called for greater accounting of the palace's finances, the abolition of royal defamation laws and a call for the king to remain outside of politics.

King Maha Vajiralongkorn sits at the apex of Thai power, bolstered by a powerful military and conservative establishment.

The new Sanam Luang plaque will be regarded "as an immediate challenge", said analyst Paul Chambers, warning that the growing acrimony could lead to "state violence against protesters".

Prayut has said Thailand would be "engulfed in flames" if the students push too hard, though he vowed "softer measures" against the weekend's protesters.

IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

US defies world with sanctions

Activates 'snapback' clause; world powers dismiss move

AGENCIES

Iran yesterday said its arch-foe the United States was "isolated" after a US unilateral declaration that UN sanctions are back in force against the Islamic republic was dismissed by other major powers.

The Trump administration said the so-called "snapback" of the sanctions was in effect and threatened to "impose consequences" on any UN member state that fails to comply.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani yesterday thanked UN Security Council members for standing firmly behind the deal and said that Washington's "maximum pressure" campaign against Tehran had thrown the US into "maximum isolation".

"America's maximum pressure against Iran, in its political and legal aspects, has turned into America's maximum isolation," Rouhani said during a televised cabinet meeting.

The sanctions in question were lifted in 2015 when Iran and six world powers -- Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the US -- reached a landmark nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

But US President Donald Trump withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018, saying the deal -- negotiated by his predecessor Barack Obama -- was insufficient. He also renewed and even strengthened Washington's own sanctions.

The US insists it is still a participant in the agreement that it stormed out of, but only so it can activate the snapback option, which it announced on August 20.

Virtually every other Security Council member disputes Washington's ability to execute this legal pirouette, and the UN body has not taken the measure any further.

Yesterday, two permanent council members -- France and Britain -- issued a joint statement along with non-permanent member Germany saying the US's "purported notification" was "incapable of having any legal effect".

Russia also said the US lacked legal authority. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced Washington's latest move in a statement. Pompeo promised measures would be announced in the coming days against "violators" of the sanctions.

With around six weeks to go until the November 3 US election, Trump could unveil those measures in a speech at the UN General Assembly on Tuesday.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif accused Pompeo of not having read UN resolutions or the nuclear deal.

"He's now probably waiting for the movie to come out so he can begin to understand it," he told state television.



Pompeo threatens of 'consequences' if partners do not comply with US move

Rouhani says 'maximum pressure' on Iran became 'maximum isolation' of US

France, Britain and Germany say US move has no 'legal effect'



People march during a demonstration against President Alexander Lukashenko's authoritarian rule in Minsk, yesterday. Tens of thousands of people marched through the capital city chanting "go away" on the sixth straight weekend of protests against Lukashenko, keeping up the pressure on him to quit.

PHOTO: AFP

Ties set to worsen as Pak blocks new Indian envoy

TNN, New Delhi

In what is certain to further destabilise Indo-Pak relations, Pakistan has denied visa to Indian diplomat Jayant Khobragade, rejecting his appointment as India's chargé d'affaires in Islamabad.

Khobragade's name had been officially proposed in June this year. In the same month, India had also further scaled down diplomatic ties with Pakistan by asking for a 50 percent reduction in mission strength.

The government sees Pakistan's rejection of Khobragade as an attempt to get back at India for its decision to downgrade ties and also as a sign of frustration over the fact that Islamabad's information war on the issue of Kashmir has failed to gain much traction internationally.

Pakistan's objection is apparently related to Khobragade's seniority as it thinks he's too senior to lead the Indian mission when its strength has been halved and at a time when there's barely any bilateral engagement between the two countries, people familiar with developments said yesterday.

India believes though it's not for Pakistan to dictate appointment of Indian diplomats in Islamabad and is likely to respond with reciprocal action in due course.

An IFS officer of 1995 batch, Khobragade is currently serving as a joint secretary in the Department of Atomic Energy. He has in the past served as Indian ambassador to the Kyrgyz Republic before working in junior capacity with Indian missions in Russia, Spain and Kazakhstan.

Since the two countries recalled their high commissioners last year, their missions have been led by the chargé d'affaires.

'A state above the state'

Pakistan's ex-PM Nawaz Sharif launches scathing attack on military, says struggle not against PM but those who brought him into power

Dawn/ANN

Pakistan's deposed premier Nawaz Sharif yesterday staged a political comeback by criticising the powerful Army and said the opposition was not against Prime Minister Imran Khan but against those who brought an "inefficient" man to power.

Addressing the All-Parties Conference (APC) hosted by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) via a video link aimed at launching a protest movement against the Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, the three-time premier launched a scathing attack on the ruling party for its "failure to address the basic problems of the people".

Nawaz, 70, the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supremo, has been living in London since November last year after the Lahore high court granted him permission to go abroad for four weeks for treatment. "Our foremost priority should be removing this selected government and this system. Our struggle is not against Imran Khan," said Nawaz. "Today, our struggle is against those who installed Imran Khan and who manipulated elections to bring an incapable man like him into power and thus, destroyed the country."

In an all-encompassing speech, which centred on criticising the Imran Khan-led government, Nawaz spoke on the

"poor state" of Pakistan's economy, "deteriorating" international relations, "muzzling" of media and "corruption within the PTI".

"If we don't do it [take a step] today, when will we?" asked Nawaz.

"Pakistan has been constantly deprived of a democratic system [...] When the vote is dishonoured, the entire democratic system becomes meaningless. When it is decided

before the election process as to who will win and who will lose, then it can be guessed how the public is betrayed and how the public's mandate is stolen."

Pakistan has become a laboratory of "such experiments", added Nawaz.

"Every child knows that no prime minister has been allowed to complete five years in power."

Nawaz said former PM Yousuf Raza Gilani once pointed to "a state within a state" in Pakistan. "It is saddening that the situation has escalated to a state above the state. This parallel government illness is the root-cause of our problems."

The speakers at APC -- PML-N's Nawaz and Shehbaz Sharif and PPP's Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari -- were united in underscoring the "need for a plan of action". The opposition, however, has yet to announce what it is.



IUB's project discusses significance of Bay of Bengal in post Covid-19 world

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM

The first of the series of webinars organised by Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) titled, "Increasing political, ecological, economic and regional importance of the Bay of Bengal for Bangladesh in the post-Covid-19 world" took place on September 15, 2020 with a panel of experts on the issue at hand.

IUB Vice-Chancellor (acting) Prof. Milan Pagon began the event by saying that these unprecedented times have taught us all a lesson on how collaboration and evidence-based decision making is the only logical approach to combating real world issues and urges the same approach to be taken to find out more about the importance of the Bay of Bengal.

The esteemed panellists also included Masud Bin Momen, Foreign Secretary of the Government as the keynote speaker and Prime Minister's International Affairs Adviser Prof Gowher Rizvi as chief guest; Prof Intiaz A Hussain, Dean (acting) at the School of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, IUB; A Matin Chowdhury, Chairman of the IUB Board of Trustee; Ito Naoki, Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh; M Shahidul Islam, Secretary General of BIMSTEC; Admiral (Retd.) Nizamuddin Ahmed; Prof Mustafizur Rahman, representative of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD); and Prof Saleemul Huq, Director of ICCCAD. The event was moderated by Ambassador (Retd.) Tariq A Karim, senior fellow at the Bay of Bengal Institute Project, IUB.

The webinar discussed important qualitative and quantitative factors of the Bay of Bengal and unravelled some valuable insights on the issues and approaches required. The first issue highlighted by the officials was the lack of research and data available on the role of the Bay of Bengal. The discussion also emphasised on the sustainability factor that the future plans may require as Covid-19 has shown how important it is to keep in mind the intricacies of the environment.

Prof Intiaz A Husain discussed the different scenarios to consider and later highlighted the implications of the steps to take. He believes that working on the issues locally and regionally will automatically lead to changes on the global level.

In his keynote speech, Ambassador Masud Bin Momen spoke about how globalisation and the rise of the two major powers, China and India, have led to the Bay of Bengal becoming of greater significance than it was before. He also reinstated the Vision 2041 and Delta Plan 2100 that has already been set in motion along with the other steps already taken to resolve issues regarding the Bay.

Two overlapping strategic processes, the US-led Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) and the China-led Belt-and-Road Initiative (BRI) and the four pillars, "freedom of navigations, peaceful resolution of territorial dispute in accordance with the international law, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and transparency in infrastructure development and responsible debt financing," were also introduced and talked about by Ambassador Momen.

Ambassador Momen then offered seven major points to discuss and consider about the issue at hand which include creating a fleet of shipping and fishing vessels to develop coastal areas, exploring the possibility of attracting economic players to set up manufacturing and containerisation facilities inside Bangladesh, exploring the possibility of centrally taking over all the major river bank systems and creating eco-friendly industrial ecosystems while preserving the essential parts of it, considering to have smart power corridors across the Bay of Bengal connecting the GBM-basin and Mekong Delta, creating a blockchain enabled platform economy system, connecting the P2P potential of the Bay of Bengal and considering preserving the skills required by engaging the youth.

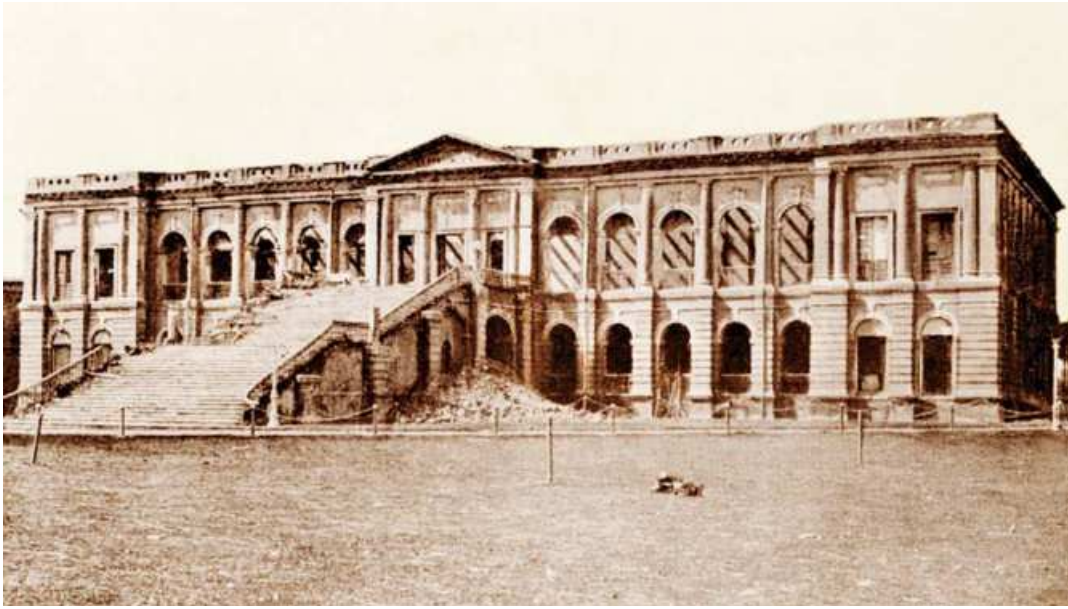
Japanese Ambassador Ito Naoki stated that Japan will continue to support Bangladesh, and said that both countries share the idea of "free and open Indo-Pacific".

Chief guest Dr Gowher Rizvi commented that there is lack of research done on the Bay of Bengal, and said its resources should be harnessed for development purposes. He also mentioned about a gap between those who make policies and those who analyse them, stating the two parties do not communicate and that this culture needs a change.

The first webinar from the series ended with Ambassador Karim saying that Bangladesh can show the world how a poor country from about 50 years ago can emerge as a nation that leads the way by setting up a system of governance to harness a purpose-driven goal.

When the Dufferins visited Dhaka

WAQAR A KHAN



The Ahsan Manzil in the aftermath of the devastating tornado, Dhaka, 1888. Writer's collection.

PHOTO: JOHNSTON & HOFFMANN, CALCUTTA



The Ruplal House on the bank of river Buriganga, Dhaka, circa 1875. Courtesy: Prabeer K Das, Kolkata.

PHOTO: JOHNSTON & HOFFMANN, CALCUTTA

The failed Indian Rebellion of 1857, which saw the ultimate triumph of the East India Company, nonetheless also led to its demise and the emergence of the last great colonial empire in modern history- the British Empire in India - popularly known today as the British Raj (1858-1947). In 1858, power was transferred from the Company to the Crown-in-Parliament in England, with the British monarch as the sovereign head of the Indian empire. Therefore, British India came to be ruled directly by the crown for the next eighty-nine years until its independence in 1947, into two separate countries. Thus, from 1858 onwards the hitherto Governor-General of India also became the Viceroy or the representative of the crown and, presided over the destiny of millions of Indian subjects no less formidable than a potentate himself, thereby enjoying more or less plenipotentiary powers. Altogether, there were twenty-four British Viceroys and Governor-Generals who governed India during this intervening

period. They fall into various categories of personalities and capacities and, served for both short and long durations in office. This story is about one such person named Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood (1826-1902), 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, commonly known in history as Lord Dufferin who was in office from: 13th December 1884 - 10th December 1888. Just before the end of his tenure, he and his wife the Vicereine Lady Hariot (1843-1936) formally known as the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, along with their daughters paid a memorable farewell visit to Dhaka from 26-28 November, 1888. What is unique about it is that Lady Dufferin has left behind a chronicle of her Dhaka visit in a book entitled 'Our Viceregal Life in India' published in 1889. Thus, her travel writing has immortalized her impressions of the Dhaka visit in fairly elaborate details, initially entered in her hand written diary. The Dufferin's visit was the greatest social event in the history of Dhaka of the late 19th century, surpassing an earlier visit by the Viceroy Lord Northbrook in 1874. Thus, the city was agog for months following the visit.

Lady Dufferin should be remembered for her remarkable contribution in establishing the 'Countess of Dufferin Fund' raised in India, which for the first time was able to deliver well-coordinated medical health programs with official backing for the public. The fund promoted a range of laudable medical initiatives and associated programs, especially in women's health and child bearing. One of the earliest beneficiaries of this fund included one of the first female medical graduate and physician of British India and South Asia, Dr Kadambini Ganguly née Basu (1861-1923). It makes us proud

to note that Kadambini's father hailed from Barishal in Bangladesh. Numerous Lady Dufferin hospitals, wards and clinics were started with this fund, some of which still exist namely the Lady Dufferin Ward at the former Mitford Hospital, in Dhaka which was established in 1888-9, by the munificence of Nawab Ahsanullah in memory of lady Dufferin's visit to Dhaka.

The readers are requested to read this article keeping a mental note of the peculiar context of the times. The following event took place a hundred and thirty-two years ago, in the colonial era and that too, at the high-noon of the British Raj. Interesting extracts of Lady Dufferin's visit to Dhaka from her book 'Our Viceregal Life in India', 1889 are presented here. Her narratives are shown within 'inverted commas' against precise dates, interspersed by my own comments under 'Writer's note'.

Monday, 26th: "I went on the barge to Dacca. The place here looks so pretty from the boat. There are such quantities

avoided the civic reception in Narayanganj fearing a recurrence of her condition and went alone to Dhaka and wait. She was rejoined by the Viceroy and their daughters, who arrived in Dhaka from Narayanganj by a special train later in the afternoon.

It is evident that because of old age and circumstances Nawab Abdul Ghani, played a more ceremonial role during the Viceregal visit to Dhaka leaving the details to his son Ahsanullah, who played the actual host being younger, more worldly and fluent in English. The Vicereine was mesmerized by the evening illumination on the grounds of Ahsan Manzil calling it 'a garden of light'. However, when she refers to the candles 12,000 of them by her account that lit all the way to Ahsan Manzil, covering its garden and grounds, it was actually the fairly-tale effulgence from the - 'dia or matir-pradeep' - those small indigenous oil based clay lamps, she had mistaken for candles at a distance. And, by 'beds' in the garden she of course meant the 'flower-beds'.

The Dufferins were given a princely reception by the Nawabs of Dhaka, replete with pomp and pageantry during their visit. After a sumptuous dinner at Ahsan Manzil, they attended a gala musical soiree of song and nautch (naach or dance) at the Rungmahal-Jalsaghar of the palace. Here the Vicereine appears rather labile about her impression of the nautch she had witnessed. She could not help but reflect the atypical disinterest then prevalent in the Victorian-colonial era English society in India, to an unique Indian dance form and heritage. The sahibs and memsahibs of earlier generations in India had once enjoyed, appreciated and sponsored nautch even in their homes by celebrated tawaif (courtesan) and baijee (dancing girl), as evidenced from the many visuals and writings, especially of the 18th century. Britons of both sexes had then sang paeans about the radiantly beautiful dancing girls and their superb skills by likening them to paradisiacal houris, ethereal beauties and bewitching dancers. However, the

hardened British attitude. They blissfully retreated into their exclusive enclaves in the - civil lines, cantonments, clubs and hill stations, increasingly isolating themselves from the teeming millions they were destined to rule. Consequently, their erroneous perception of racial superiority, arrogance, prejudice, overt or subtle discrimination replaced the curiosity, spirit of enquiry and appreciation of Indian peoples and culture as patrons, which had once characterized many in the earlier generations of Britons in India. In this regard, note lady Dufferin's patronizing 'finish' to her rather uncomplimentary comment on the nautch she had witnessed. Having already spoken her uninhibited mind on the nautch, she tried to cover it up by tersely concluding that, "though I like a little of it". It goes without saying, that the Nawabs of Dhaka had put out their very best nautch or dancing girls to entertain the Dufferin's, with the likes of Nawabon baijee and above all Abdul Ghani's favorite, the legendary tawaif Achee Saheb amongst others. One can well imagine the rest, as to how well these exceptionally talented dancers must have performed on that special evening at the Jalsaghar! On the other hand the Vicereine too, was merely expressing the then well ingrained Anglo - Indian societal perception, that is, the willful ignorance and prejudices of her time.

Lady Dufferin was naturally surprised to find that there were actually two sitting Nawab's at Ahsan Manzil, Dhaka. She was of course referring to Nawabs Abdul Ghani and his son Ahsanullah. Both the father and son were conferred with the titles of Nawab simultaneously on the same day in 1875, a rarity in those days. In 1877, the title was further made hereditary for the Khawja family, again a rare honor for a zamindar. The only other Muslim nobility in Bengal sharing this 'hereditary right' of succession in accordance with the law of primogeniture, was the Nawab of Murshidabad, who were actually royals and once a ruling family (Nawabs of Bengal) and thus in terms of protocol

lent by a native gentleman; the house and gardens were all illuminated. There were about twenty ladies and double the number of men, and a band from Calcutta, and the most silver programmes for us. Solid silver books, with my initials on one side and D's crest, collars, &c., on the other. What do you think of that! At supper D's health was proposed by Mr. Hopkins, the Commissioner, and as we left the ladies cheered from the balcony, and all the men from the quay, till we were out sight. The ball was very well done, and was very pretty, and the Viceroy danced ten dances without stopping, while I talked to all the ladies in turn"

Writer's note: In 19th century Dhaka, the two grandest palatial mansions were those of the Dhaka Nawabs called Ahsan Manzil and Ruplal House belonging to the wealthy Das brothers on the Buckland Bund, a popular promenade along the Buriganga River. Both houses presented a magnificent view from the river. However, on 7th April, 1888 a devastating tornado tore across Dhaka causing serious damage to the rear façade of the Rungmahal and the Andarmahal of Ahsan manzil, so much so, that the Khawja family had to temporarily relocate elsewhere for a while. However, the impending scheduled visit of the Dufferin's to Dhaka in late November that year, necessitated hurried renovation works to tidy up Ahsan Manzil. The unregistered Dhaka Club then located at Johnson road in old Dhaka, had also decided to give a Ball in honor of Lord and Lady Dufferin. There were only two available places for such an exclusive occasion, conveniently located in Dhaka: the Jalsaghar (dance hall) at Ahsan Manzil with a floor space measuring; length: 51' 0" x width: 24' 0" and the other at Ruplal House measuring; length: 21' 9" x width: 14' 0" with a splendid 300 feet long uninterrupted view of the river outside. The Dufferin's were already scheduled to be entertained by the Nawabs at Ahsan Manzil. However, the Ball could not be held there anyway, because the Nawabs were not members of the Dhaka Club, and thus could not be invited to attend the Ball, in accordance with the stringent membership rules of the Club. At that time, there was no native member of the Dhaka Club. It would remain so until 1914, when Nawabzada K M Habibullah (later Nawab of Dhaka) became its first local member (please see my book: Dhaka Club Chronicles, 2009). So, under these peculiar circumstances in 1888, the Club was forced to settle for the smaller dance floor of the Ruplal House from the Das brothers, who although enormously rich were not titled gentry. Moreover, the Das brothers belonged more to the vernacular elite, whereas the non-vernacular Khawja's of Ahsan Manzil were not only the titular Nawabs, but also the premier zamindar of Dhaka district, fairly anglicized and thus a favorite of the colonial higher-ups. Therefore, selecting the space from the Das's did not require the Club to lose face, for not being able to invite them to the Ball on their own property, as would have been the case if the Ball was held at the Ahsan Manzil, besides being an untenable proposition to begin with.

Wednesday, 28th: "We are going back to Calcutta now, and spend this day in our barge and tomorrow in the railway." **Writer's note:** The Dufferin's on their visit to Dhaka spent three nights on a luxurious barge which was moored at Wiseghat. It was towed all the way from Calcutta by a special steamer up to Narayanganj, from where Lady Dufferin had sailed on it along the Sitalakhya and Buriganga rivers to reach Dhaka. At the conclusion of their visit, the Dufferins rested a whole day on their barge and left Dhaka the following morning, Thursday, 29th November, 1888, by a special train for Calcutta.

Thursday, 29th: "In the evening we had a ball, which we reached with difficulty. The river is low here, and there are sand banks in all directions, and we went aground, and then had to turn back when we were just opposite our destination, and to go round quite a different way. Even then we could not get up to the house, and a small boat had to be sent for us. The view from the river was quite lovely. The town was again illuminated, and the shapes of all the buildings shown in lines of light against the sky made it look like a fairy city. The dance was given by the Club in a house

Waqar A Khan is the Founder of Bangladesh Forum for Heritage Studies



Lord Dufferin (1826-1902)
Viceroy and Governor-General of British India



Lady Hariot Dufferin (1843-1936)
the Vicereine



Nawab Bahadur Sir Khwaja Abdul Ghani (1813-1896) of Dhaka, 1888. Writer's collection. Artist's rendition: Johnston & Hoffmann, Calcutta



Nawab Sir Khwaja Ahsanullah Bahadur (1848-1901) of Dhaka, 1888. Writer's collection. Artist's rendition: Johnston & Hoffmann, Calcutta

of flags, and such beautiful triumphal arches, and some picturesque mosques and buildings. We dined with the Nawab and drove through the town, where the illuminations were lovely. There were palisades of light, and buildings picked out in fire, and chains of lamps, and when we reached a long avenue leading to the Nawab's house it was lighted by candles the whole way-12,000 candles. His garden was literally transformed into a garden of light, all the beds marked out by lines of fire. We thought 'Ave Ava' in gold letters on an arch was a very happy thought. 'The Nawab' may be said to consist of two persons, a very old father and middle-aged son. The son has all the power and does all the business, but both are devoted to each other, and the son is so attentive to his father, who can scarcely bear him to go out of sight. He cannot go out shooting, or be away half a day from the old man, and it is nice to see them with each other. The son dined and took me in to dinner. He speaks English quite well, and the entertainment was exceedingly well done and nice in every way. After dinner we had native dance music and a nautch. Have I yet succeeded in instructing you as to the extreme propriety and dullness of a nautch? There is never any incident in it, and no apparent purpose, and it is a most incomprehensible amusement, though I like a little of it."

Writer's note: Having reached Narayanganj from Calcutta by a special train, the Viceroy's party broke journey to attend a civic reception in the town and visit a jute mill. The Viceroy and daughters stayed back in Narayanganj, while the Vicereine proceeded to Dhaka on a luxurious houseboat towed by a steamer. The Vicereine having just recovered from a minor throat infection,

latter day 19th century Britons in India, by then heavily influenced by the bible touting moralizing English evangelists, prejudiced memsahibs forever protective of their men-folk from the enticing Indian vices (read from the warm embrace of the nautch girls) came to consider all things Indian as incomprehensible, decadent, even abhorrent including its rich traditional art forms, such as, Hindu iconography with its seemingly bewildering plethora of deities, and the profusion of rites and rituals during Puja. Furthermore, the trauma resulting from the great Indian rebellion of 1857, for which the insensitive policies of the Company were supremely responsible in fomenting it, nonetheless made things worse. It

and precedence, formally designated as the premier nobles of Bengal during the British Raj.

Tuesday, 27th: "In the evening we had a ball, which we reached with difficulty. The river is low here, and there are sand banks in all directions, and we went aground, and then had to turn back when we were just opposite our destination, and to go round quite a different way. Even then we could not get up to the house, and a small boat had to be sent for us. The view from the river was quite lovely. The town was again illuminated, and the shapes of all the buildings shown in lines of light against the sky made it look like a fairy city. The dance was given by the Club in a house

Gruesome torture and death of child migrant worker

How long will recruiting agencies be allowed to act with impunity?

A report in this daily yesterday revealed the horrific sexual abuse and torture that is faced by female Bangladeshi migrant workers, some of them children, in the hands of their Saudi employers and even their Bangladeshi recruiters. While a large number of women have returned over the past few years to narrate horror stories of the ordeals they faced, these accounts have once again come to light after a Rab raid on Thursday on the office of the recruiting agency M/H Trade International, and the arrest of its owner Mokbul Hossain and his associate Parvez, for offences under the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act. This recruiting agency is responsible for sending 14-year-old Umme Kulsum to a Saudi employer who tortured her to death.

This is not the first case of M/H Trade International trafficking women into what can only be described as slavery in Saudi Arabia. In 2018, a 28-year-old returnee migrant worker spoke of how her Saudi employers raped her, starved her and pushed her off the roof and left her permanently disabled. She also spoke of being raped by a local recruiting agent of M/H Trade International, and claimed that the arrested recruiting agent Mokbul knew of her plight and chose to do nothing about it. *The Daily Star* reporter also spoke to other women who recounted similar stories of sexual abuse and starvation, alleging that the recruiting agency was fully aware of their circumstances. Not only did M/H Trade International look the other way, most of these women did not even receive their full wages after the torture they faced.

Given that some of these allegations were made as early on as 2017, why was M/H Trade International allowed to continue to recruit migrant workers and send them abroad? Why was their office only raided in 2020? How did the agency manage to “convince” officials from the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET), whose immigration clearance is required to send workers abroad, that a 14-year-old child met the minimum age requirement for migrant workers? Why did BMET allegedly ignore the family’s requests to bring Kulsum back home? Why are so many recruiting agencies still out of the purview of the law, despite trapping Bangladeshi citizens in conditions of slavery in foreign countries?

It is not enough for the authorities to investigate individual cases only after the gruesome torture of female migrant workers have led to their deaths. The nexus of recruiting agencies and corrupt officials that allows trafficking through legal migration channels must be dismantled. The authorities must act quickly, before more Bangladeshi women get swallowed up into this abyss of violence and torture.

Saving project money praiseworthy

RHD’s proposal to build more bridges with the money also laudable

A time when cost escalations and time extensions of various infrastructure development projects in the country have become common phenomena, it is heartening that authorities of a project under the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) were able to save Tk 286 crore so far and are also on the right track to complete the project within the deadline. The Western Bangladesh Bridges Improvement Project, under which 81 bridges are now being built with Japanese finances, have also proposed building 10 more bridges under their ongoing project with the saved money. According to the project director, while the main reason for the save was the changes in the currency rate (Japanese Yen vs Tk), they have also saved money from the contract and contingency cost.

According to the road transport and bridges minister, the total cost of two other RHD projects were also reduced—more than Tk 1,000 crore was saved in a project under which three new bridges were constructed and three old bridges on the Dhaka-Chatogram highway were repaired, while Tk 220 crore was saved in a project under which the third bridge on Kamaphuli was constructed.

Unfortunately, this is not the case for the majority of the ongoing development projects in the country where cost escalations and time extensions have become the norm. For instance, the cost of the Padma Bridge project, the Khulna-Mongla rail track project were increased, while the metro rail project has also been delayed. Although the original cost of the Padma bridge was estimated Tk 10,161 crore in 2007 on the basis of a feasibility study, after several revisions, the cost rose to Tk 30,193 crore.

But this particular RHD project should serve as an example to the other project authorities who should try to complete their projects within the stipulated budget and on time. If they do so, this would definitely lessen the burden on the taxpayers. As for this particular project, we hope the authorities will be given the go-ahead for building 10 more bridges with the saved money as soon as possible.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Extending tenure of Wasa MD worrisome

I was shocked to find that Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) board members approved a proposal to extend the tenure of its present managing director by three more years. There have been many controversies around how he has carried out his responsibilities.

The current MD was appointed in 2009 and has been serving for five consecutive terms over the last 11 years.

Now, Wasa authorities will send a proposal to the local government ministry to reappoint him as MD for three more years. It is absurd to reappoint an MD, a position that demands fulfilling crucial responsibilities, when that person has such a history.

Jamshed A Khan, Dhaka

Peace in the time of pandemic

How is the world faring against Covid and conflict?

A CLOSER LOOK



TASNEEM TAYEB

IN a time of an unprecedented global health crisis that is only spiralling from one peak to another, one would expect all parties—warring or not—to join hands and work together to establish peace. Not

that we should need added motivation to seek peace for anything other than the sake of peace itself; but as we are all painfully aware, we live in a deeply imperfect world. Not surprisingly, therefore, the theme of this year’s International Day of Peace is “Shaping Peace Together”.

This year, it has been clearer than ever that we are not each other’s enemies. Rather, our common enemy is a tireless virus that threatens our health, security and very way of life. Covid-19 has thrown our world into turmoil and forcibly reminded us that what happens in one part of the planet can impact people everywhere”, suggests the United Nations website’s page on International Day of Peace.

This approach towards forging unity against the common global enemy Covid-19 is in line with the UN Secretary-General’s earlier call in March to stop wars to fight Covid-19 together—“I am calling for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world. It is time to put armed conflict on lockdown and focus together on the true fight of our lives.” And that appeal by António Guterres—when the world was caught off-guard by the super-spreading pandemic—did indeed ignite a tiny ray of hope that perhaps under the unprecedented circumstances the world leaders would put their differences and personal agendas aside and work in tandem to fight the common enemy.

Reality unfortunately unfolded otherwise. What was expected to diffuse conflict and promote peace, unleashed a new set of challenges for the communities to fight. As Covid-19 brought nations to a complete halt for months, many—especially in the developing countries—faced, and continue to face, the brunt of nationwide lockdowns and its devastating impacts on economics.

Price hike of essentials; pay-cuts, even loss of jobs; reduced access to national resources, lack of access to healthcare facilities, often crumbling under the surmounting pressure of the pandemic, increased state intervention in public life in the name of flattening the curve, rise of racist and xenophobic tendencies,

have afflicted nations and peoples since the outbreak of the pandemic, and its ripple-effects have been faced by all. And with inequality and discrimination rising, economic pressures increasing, people are being left with no other option but to rise up for their rights.

While the United States has been rocked by the “Black Lives matter” protests with people raising their voices against the racist, white supremacist tendencies of a segment of people and policymakers,

overshadowed by the continuous conflict between Israel-Palestine that shows no sign of ease. Lebanon has once again erupted post the Beirut blast, and of course, life in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen remain as insecure and uncertain as ever.

In Asia, the repeated Indo-Sino border misadventures have put the region on edge, with neighbouring countries appealing for calm. But with sporadic skirmishes continuing along parts of the 3,440 kilometre disputed border between

over its equitable allocation. Turkey sending out the Oruc Reis, its seismic exploration vessel, into the disputed eastern Mediterranean region—the vessel had to be recalled recently though—had escalated tensions further. And this dispute over resources have ruffled feathers in Europe with France throwing its support behind Greek claims, and the German Chancellor—true to her poison nature—calling for dialogue to resolve the issue. But with tensions burning high in the Mediterranean, it remains to be seen if this fire can be extinguished before it destroys lives, unlike the one at the Moria refugee camp which has ravaged the lives of thousands of helpless refugees.

The refugees and the ones cursed with life in war-torn countries suffer, day in and day out, without home, without protection, without medical care and often without food. And the children are the worst victims. According to Save the Children estimate, “67,000 children are at risk of dying from extreme hunger across Sub-Saharan Africa before the end of the year as already dire circumstances are exacerbated by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.”

“Virus-linked hunger is leading to the deaths of 10,000 more children a month over the first year of the pandemic, according to an urgent call to action from the United Nations shared with The Associated Press ahead of its publication in the *Lancet* medical journal”, reported *The Washington Post* on July 28, 2020. And with the state of affairs as it is, the days ahead look grim and tense.

One only wonders how peace is going to prevail amidst all these challenges and uncertainties. While it is only rational to call on everyone, nations and individuals alike, to come forward and work to shape peace together, how realistic and feasible it is in the current context remains to be seen.

The world today needs much more than just a call for shaping peace together. The world needs rational leaders who can put aside their big egos and petty differences and engage proactively in taking constructive measures to bring peace within their nations and outside. A day to celebrate peace, a day to promote ceasefire is a noble idea. But making it sustainable, feasible and universal is a different ballgame altogether. As the world observes a different kind of International Day of Peace, let us hope that good sense prevails, among the political leaders and the people who elect them to power.

The newly discovered hydrocarbon resources in the Mediterranean have put Greece, Cyprus and Turkey at loggerheads

Tasneem Tayeb is a columnist for *The Daily Star*. Her Twitter handle is: @TayebTasneem



Houthi rebel fighters inspect the damage after a reported air strike carried out by the Saudi-led coalition targeted the presidential palace in the Yemeni capital Sanaa.

PHOTO
AFP

in Belarus people are on the streets demonstrating against the malpractices of the Belarusian government and President Alexander Lukashenko. And the protests in Hong Kong continue in phases against Chinese manoeuvres to exert greater authority and control over the area.

In Latin America, malnourished, ill, and desperately in need of social safety assistance for survival, many have been forced to come down to the streets to protest against the government’s inability to support people and their basic needs in this time of unprecedented crisis. From Bolivia and Brazil to Chile, the continent has witnessed various scales of protest against the governments: form sporadic clashes to mass demonstrations, all because of the government’s response to the pandemic, which to the sufferers seem inadequate at best and selective towards the favoured few at worst.

And in the Middle East, the Trump administration’s cosmetic attempts to restore peace in the region through “normalisation” of ties of UAE and Bahrain with Israel, has been

the two neighbours, there is no sign of the unease subsiding anytime soon. Thailand continues battling its own internal political dilemma. And Myanmar continues persecution of the helpless Rohingya population unabated.

Meanwhile in Africa, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam had locked Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia in a tense dispute over the allocation of the Blue Nile’s water, with Egypt and Sudan fearing the dam would rod them off the much needed resource as Ethiopia announced that it has started filling up the reservoir of the dam. Apart from water security, poor healthcare infrastructure affecting both health workers and patients and corruption in managing Covid-19 resources have affected many countries. As late as September 3, 2020, health workers demonstrated in South Africa protesting poor working conditions and the corruption of the government in purchasing medical PPE.

The newly discovered hydrocarbon resources in the Mediterranean have put Greece, Cyprus and Turkey at loggerheads

Covid-19 and the indefensible position of internally displaced people in Bangladesh

SHAWKAT ALAM

THE United Nations Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) has recognised the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on poor and densely populated urban areas, and particularly on informal settlements and slums. Bangladesh recorded its first case of Covid-19 in March, and the rate of infection has rapidly increased since then. The Bangladesh government has responded to the pandemic by raising a national-level alert and implementing a wide range of public health measures. However, when considering the high density nature of informal settlements and slums, preventing the spread of the virus through social distancing and self-isolation measures becomes hugely difficult, if not impossible.

These issues arise in the context of intensifying rural to urban migration patterns due to displacement caused by climate change, which has increased the density of informal settlements and placed extreme pressure on urban infrastructure. Although Dhaka has been the destination of choice for many new climate migrants, many migrants pass through secondary cities and regional centres along the way. These cities have the potential to become major population centres, however, pull factors such as employment opportunities, make Dhaka the primary city of choice for many new climate change migrants. To reduce the strain placed on Dhaka and ensure that all citizens have access to the essential services they require, secondary cities will play an important role in adopting new climate change migrants by creating competing pull factors against Dhaka.

Following the government’s “general holiday” declaration in the beginning of the Covid-19 transmission, many people left Dhaka, and it was reported that “Hundreds of thousands of people, who had come to Dhaka in hopes of leading a better future for themselves as well as for their children, are now being forced to leave the city of their dreams due to job cuts caused by the coronavirus.” According to a joint survey conducted by BRAC, DataSense and Ummayyeh Shamannay, the pandemic has put over 102 million people at financial and economic risk. Among those surveyed, over 34 percent of families said that at least one family member had lost their job. Meanwhile, 74 percent of families witnessed a fall in their income and 1.4 million expatriate

workers were found to be returning home after losing their livelihoods. With Dhaka already reaching its limit in terms of carrying capacity and ability to cope with the impacts of the pandemic, secondary cities across Bangladesh are well placed to absorb climate change migrants and create new economic opportunities. The Covid-19 situation makes addressing displacement, particularly with respect to resettlement, public health, and employment, more urgent than ever.

It is important that the response to the Covid-19 pandemic is equitable, and the framing of law and policy to allow for the effective development of secondary cities to accommodate climate migrants will be an important means of achieving

and tertiary hospitals, despite 70 percent of the Bangladeshi population living in rural communities.

Sound health policy must also be integrated with other policy disciplines in order to promote good health outcomes of emerging regional centres and a middle-class. Sanitation, clean drinking water, healthy nutrition, basic health education and family planning are all necessary to improve the health outcomes of displaced and vulnerable communities. Steps are already being undertaken to improve the health outcomes of Bangladeshis, however further coordination is required in order to future-proof existing policy and programmes so that it can better address the rising issue of climate change



Desperate to go to their village home, people rush to board a ferry at Shimulia Ferry Terminal in Munshiganj.

PHOTO:
STAR

this. As part of this framing, an awareness and understanding of the challenges and opportunities for the implementation of law and policy in secondary cities in the midst of the global pandemic is necessary.

A healthy, productive workforce is the backbone of economic activity. The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the interdependency between a healthy workforce, robust economic growth and a rise in living standards. Without access to basic medical services, a supportive health infrastructure and nutrition, urban renewal or regional development is unsustainable. Bangladesh has made remarkable strides in improving the health outcomes of its citizens and developing the capacity to perform public health initiatives. However, significant challenges remain. Health workers continue to be highly concentrated in urban secondary

displacement and migration, particularly in the light of Covid-19.

The public health measures put in place thus far largely fail to recognise the realities faced in informal settlements where adequate healthcare, water and sanitation facilities are often not readily available. There has been evidence of minimal adoption of such measures by the public at large and a lack of public awareness of the measures, and the virus more generally. Without access to adequate health services, shelter, or social security to help them cope with the new measures, internally displaced persons are more vulnerable to risks of infection.

Thus, in addition to increasing the effectiveness of awareness programmes, public health measures ought to be reflective of the realities faced by climate migrants and the need for adequate

healthcare facilities to be made available to them. In this way, the Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021 notes that “healthcare facilities will be taken to the doorstep of the people by constructing thousands of new clinics at the grass root level to provide primary health services to the rural community.” This position presents a clear iteration of developing the capacity for local and regional centres to provide healthcare services, and reduce migration to Dhaka that already faces significant strain on its healthcare infrastructure. Stronger emphasis is needed towards the provision of services to regional centres so that these secondary cities can create pull factors for future migration.

The commitment to provide quality health services is continued in the government’s 7th Five Year Plan which outlines health policies that have synergies with new city development for the relocation of displaced persons. The plan calls for, among other things, improved service delivery, the decentralisation of the management of facilities and protecting the interests of the poor. All of these measures are to take into account “deficiencies in governance and management of the health sector.”

The government will play an important role in facilitating and supporting an array of public policies which have an overarching objective of creating sustainable, secondary cities. Such policies ought to be in the forefront of the minds of policymakers and government officials alike, particularly within the present climate. Focus on equipping secondary cities with the resources necessary to accommodate climate migrants will be a vital strategy, not only serving as a long-term solution to ensure that climate migrants have access to the resources and infrastructure they require, but also in responding to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic which has seen many climate migrants leave Dhaka to return to rural villages. As has been observed, the realities of the way many citizens have to live makes following the current health guidelines very challenging. This is particularly acute with respect to climate migrants who, as marginalised populations, require recognition of their lived experiences and the challenges they face, within the laws and policies that are designed to assist them.

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Requiem for an educator

In Memoriam: Sebia Sulaiman



AN OPEN DIALOGUE

ABDULLAH SHIBLI

SEBIA Sulaiman, a pioneer in the field of early childhood education and a lifelong social worker passed away at 5:30 AM on September 19, 2020 at a city hospital in Dhaka. She was laid to rest

after Zuhr prayers the same day by her two sons, Habib Sadat Choudhury, MD and professor Dr Habib Numan Choudhury, at the Shaheed Buddhijibi Graveyard in Mirpur. Sebia Sulaiman was 85 and is survived by the two sons and two daughters, professor Dr Parsa Choudhury and Arifa Choudhury, MD who due to the suddenness of their mother's demise and the Covid-19 restrictions in the USA, were unable to be at her bedside in the last few days of her brief illness.

Sebia and her four children followed the footsteps of her father and father-in-law. Her father was Abdul Mumith Choudhury of Sylhet, a civil surgeon, and she married Sulaiman Choudhury, son of Habibur Rahman Choudhury, principal of Government Aliya Madrasa, Sylhet. During her rich career life and thereafter, she dedicated herself to the cause of education and social emancipation of the underprivileged. In an article entitled "Glimpses of Education in America" published in *Bangladesh Observer* she wrote, "In the farthest corner of my mind lies a fountain of aspirations for the movement to the higher world of studies. I reveal here the story of my teaching as a volunteer teacher there in America as a humble gesture to all devotees of knowledge in the field of teaching". (July 2, 1983)

Sebia began her teaching career in 1960 after receiving her Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree from Mymensingh Teacher's Training College. She taught at Cantonment Modern School (renamed Shaheed Anwar School) and then transferred to Vigarunnesa Noon School (VNS) in 1964 where she taught both in the Junior and Senior Sections. After eighteen years at VNS she joined Purana Paltan Women's College where she taught for five years. In the interim, in 1974, she earned her MA (English) from Dhaka University.

As the eldest of five sisters and a role model from her early life. Her father, a physician, was posted at different locations before and after the partition of India in 1947 and she took upon herself the task of looking after her younger siblings which she continued after marriage in 1954 to the illustrious banker, Sulaiman Choudhury. Sulaiman lost his father at the age of 16 and was at the helm of his family, led by his mother Hifzunnesa Khanam who moved to Maulvi Bazar to be with her father Syed Sikander Ali and her three brothers (Syed Mustafa Ali, Syed Murtaza Ali, and Syed Mujtaba Ali). After their marriage, Sebia and Sulaiman nurtured his four younger sisters throughout their entire life.

I learned a lot about Sebia Sulaiman and her values in life after her family took me in during my SSC years in their residence in Bank House, Minto Road. While in her personal life, she was a quiet and silent worker with a house full of children from her own and those of her four clamorous sisters-in-law, she managed to juggle many balls at the same time as a school teacher, mother, and an essential cog in a well-oiled machine known as the extended family.

Good educators like Sebia Sulaiman create new opportunities to grow and work with their colleagues to do the



Sebia Sulaiman with her family.

PHOTO: COURTESY

same. At VNS, she came in contact with other great teachers including Alia Amin and Siddiqua Kabir, wife of Syed Ali Kabir, who like Sulaiman started his career at the State Bank of Pakistan.

A well-loved personality in the USA, Mr Rogers, creator of "Mister Rogers' Neighbourhood" once said, "I think silence is one of the greatest gifts we have." If that's true, Sebia had a lot to

give. In her classroom, she encouraged her students to reflect during quiet time. Her favourite quotation was from Henri Nouwen who said, "As an educator, I hope that students gain the confidence to express themselves and the strength to ask for help. At their age, students can sometimes struggle to find their voices and hear those of others."

It was my privilege to know this

great educator closely when she married my only maternal uncle, Sulaiman Choudhury, a banker and philanthropist. When I was in Class X in Government Laboratory High School, my father was transferred from Dhaka to Dinajpur as the District and Sessions Judge of Dinajpur and Bogra. I would have been a homeless student if my *mami* did not invite me to share their two-bedroom flat in Bank House, Minto Road, with her family of six, including her mother-in-law. During the next year when I stayed with the family, I saw multiple examples of her dedication to her students and family, particularly her extended family. When the results of my SSC exam came out a year later in June 1967, my *mami* was the first to congratulate me for topping the Combined Merit List as a student of Humanities in the Dhaka Board. "Shibli, you are only keeping up with your family tradition!" she said in her soft, measured tone.

In her autobiographical book "Jeeboner Kotha" (Stories from My Life) she talks about the time in the early 1950s when she was enrolled in Victoria College of Comilla as a BA student. Akhter Hamid Khan, the founder of Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), was then officiating as the principal of Victoria College and gave a memorable speech to the students. AH Khan encouraged them to engage with the underprivileged and was a source of inspiration for Sebia during her lifelong work as an educator and for social welfare. She worked with Rotary Inner Wheel and was a life member of Assistance for Blind Children (ABC) and Underprivileged Children's Educational Program (UCEP), two non-profit NGOs.

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

The world's most blighted minority

STRAIGHT LINE



MUHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

AS the plight of Myanmar's Rohingya Muslim minority numbering nearly 1.2 million stranded in Bangladesh crosses the third painful year, one is reminded of the

most blighted ethnic minority in Asia. Their miseries have long been known to the international community but real relief and rehabilitation is not in sight. The names of these hapless Rohingyas have been removed from Myanmar's draconian household registration system that keeps track of people's movements and they are often handed stiff fines.

The Rohingyas inhabit the worst position in Myanmar's dreadful human rights landscape. The men and young boys risk the dangerous journey across the Andaman Sea to seek employment and to send money back to families barely surviving in their homeland. The difference between a refugee fleeing persecution and one seeking a better life does not mean much to the Rohingyas because both are true. They have borne the brunt of the Myanmar military regime's brutal State building for decades.

Myanmar's treatment of its Muslim minority has generally been characterised by neglect punctuated by scapegoating. The Rohingyas have been subjected to particularly harsh treatment, possibly more than any other ethno-religious minority in Myanmar. Despite not having staged any armed rebellion of substance against the central government in the past, successive military governments have harboured a uniquely vicious aversion to the Rohingyas.

For the Rohingyas, centuries of co-existence with the Arakanese Buddhists was bifurcated by British colonialism, when the boundaries of India and Burma were demarcated. As a result, the Rohingyas became a people caught between States, with the majority situated in newly independent Burma in 1948. It would be relevant to recall that in 1978, the Burmese army mounted a murderous ethnic cleansing campaign they called Operation Dragon King (Naga Min) that drove 200,000 Rohingyas into Bangladesh. Again in 1991, the Burmese army repeated the pogrom. More than a quarter million Rohingyas were driven out of Arakan into Teknaf and Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

In Myanmar the Rohingyas are officially an alien and illegal community, not listed as one of the 135 recognised "ethnic nationalities" in Burma and thus the majority of them are not entitled to national identity cards. This Stateless status has provided the security forces with impunity to perpetrate routine abuses against Muslims in Western Burma.

The Myanmar military's routine abuses of the Rohingyas aggravate the chronic poverty. They are denied travel permission between villages, which limits employment opportunities, education and trade. Permission for even limited travel from local military units is most often denied. The

military seize their land for military-connected business projects. Forced labour and expropriation of property is a daily reality. Religious persecution is widespread, with many mosques destroyed or ordered to be emptied. Extrajudicial killings are common. In fact, there is an unofficial policy of discrimination whose ultimate aim is the forced removal of a minority group.

The hatred towards the Rohingyas, beneath the excuses of national security, legal measures against illegal immigration, or even nationalism can be traced to racism. South Asians are derogatorily referred to as Kala (foreigner) in Burma by every other ethnic group, but the Rohingyas are even

beneath this level of disdain. Muslims in Myanmar are more likely to be terrorised by the Myanmar military than to be terrorists.

The Rohingyas are more a foresworn people. No one wants them, even though the world is well aware of their predicament. Their persecution has been a litany of horrors that the international community has been well aware of, but helpless or unwilling to rectify. There is a collective failure to address the root causes of the flight of the Rohingyas from the Myanmar resulting in their continued misery.

The cause of an oppressed Muslim minority is given short shrift. Western governments claim to champion oppressed Christians but by downplaying much larger-scale violations against Muslims, they are jeopardising the remainder of the west's human rights credibility. Their passivity reinforces the global shift to the so-called religious nationalism that allegedly commenced in the Muslim world.

Since Muslims are resented more than other minorities, their plight tests whether liberal democracy means what it claims to mean. Sadly enough, the silence of Muslim countries, particularly of the Arab world, about the plight of large chunk of Muslims in Asia underlines the loneliness of Muslim minorities.

It is significant to note that at present the largest countries of the world by population are to varying degrees hostile to Muslims. The big powers of Asia are uninterested in the fate of Myanmar's Rohingyas who have been the world's biggest victims of ethnic cleansing in recent years. Broadly speaking, we are in a world that is largely callous about the fate of Muslims where they are the minority. No wonder that the miseries of the Rohingyas persist unabated.

Muhammad Nurul Huda is a former IGP.



Rohingya refugees wait after crossing the Naf river from Myanmar into Bangladesh in Whaikhyang, October 9, 2017.

PHOTO: FRED DUFOUR/AFP

QUOTABLE Quote

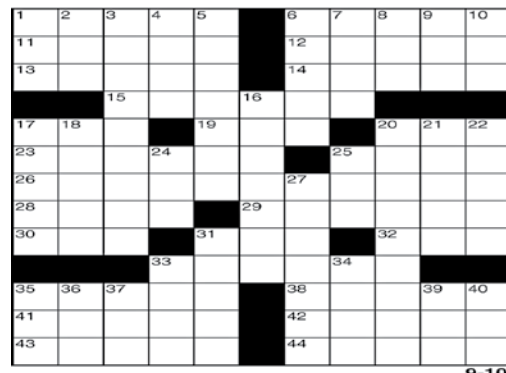


TERENCE MCKENNA (1946-2000) American ethnobotanist, mystic, lecturer, author.

The imagination is the golden pathway to everywhere.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

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| ACROSS | 33 Clip on | 16 Ventilation system part |
| 1 Did hay work | 35 Cellist Casals | 17 Mosque faith |
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| 11 Spiny plant | 41 Accepted truth | 20 Overnight work |
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| 14 Wide awake | 44 Weasel's cousin | 24 Pot fill |
| 15 Rio Grande city | | 25 "Morning Edition" network |
| 17 Suffering | DOWN | 27 Quebec neighbor |
| 19 Tentative taste | 1 Butter unit | 31 Molecule |
| 20 Golf position | 2 Wisdom bringer | 34 Oodles |
| 23 Usher, at times | 3 Language of AD 200-600 | 34 Jargon |
| 25 Zilch | 4 Demonic | 35 Butter unit |
| 26 One slow to embrace new tech | 5 Diver's place | 36 Hacking tool |
| 28 China setting | 6 Hold tightly | 37 Storage spot |
| 29 Other-worldly | 7 Ring of light | 39 View |
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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



BEETLE BAILEY

BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



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

Food must

FROM PAGE 12

The conference, which lasts for two and a half hours, discusses the stock position of food grains in the country and requirements for the next three months of the year. The distribution programme for the next three months, including the transportations arrangements to move food grains to deficit areas, is thoroughly discussed. Special emphasis is given on the movement of the allotted food grains to the affected areas. The prime minister emphasises the need for making food grains available in time to the people of distressed pockets in the country. The conference also discusses the stock position of edible oil and its distribution and transportation programmes.

RIPPON CALLS ON BANGABANDHU

The visiting British Minister Geoffrey Rippon calls on Bangabandhu at the Gono Bhaban today. During the 30-minute meeting, they discuss various issues relating to the Bangladesh-UK relationship.

BANGLADESH INCLUDED IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Pushing aside hurdles placed by China and three other countries, the general committee of the United Nations today votes for inclusion of the Yugoslav item for UN membership for Bangladesh in the agenda of the General Assembly. The Yugoslav motion may come up before the Assembly late in October.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS MEET THE PM

Three members of the Bangladesh Planning Commission meet the prime minister at the Gono Bhaban today and submit a report on necessary measures relating to resolve pressing economic problems in the country. The members are Rehman Sobhan, Dr Mosharraf Hussain and Dr Anisur Rahman.

SOURCES: September 22, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Covid-19 test

FROM PAGE 12

The CRISPR is a genome editing technology developed by the Tata Group, the CSIR and the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology to diagnose diseases and meets high-quality benchmarks with 96 percent sensitivity and 98 percent specificity for detecting coronavirus, the CSIR said in a statement.

This test uses an indigenously developed CRISPR technology for detection of the genomic sequence of SARS-CoV-2 virus, said the statement.

The Tata-CRISPR test deploys a specially-adapted Cas9 protein to successfully detect the virus causing Covid-19, it said.

The innovation in the technology has been done by a young research team led by two Bengali scientists Debojyoti Chakraborty and Souvik Maiti.

Trial of lone

FROM PAGE 12

The tribunal yesterday asked journalists not to write or print details of the statements.

During yesterday's hearing, the lone accused --Majnu -- was produced before the tribunal.

On January 5th, a DU student was raped while she was walking from Kurmitola bus stop to a friend's house near Shewra Rail gate in the capital around 7:30pm after getting off a university bus.

The next day, the girl's father filed the case with Cantonment Police Station, accusing unknown people.

On January 8th, Rab arrested 30-year-old Majnu from Shewra area. On March 16th, Inspector Abu Bakar Siddique, of the detective branch of police and also the investigation officer of the case, submitted the charge sheet against Majnu to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka.

On August 26th, the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-7 of Dhaka framed charges against the accused in the case.

OC, 4 cops

FROM PAGE 12

The closed police officials arrested Lutfar Rahman, manager of RFL's Best Buy, from a level crossing check point in Shayestaganj on September 14.

After five hours of taking him into police custody, OC Mozammel took bribe from him and released him, the ASP said.

Lutfur, in a written complaint filed to Habiganj Superintendent of Police (SP) Mohammad Ullah, mentioned that he had to pay Tk 28,500 that night for his release from police custody.

Lutfur said he went to Alipur on Dhaka-Sylhet highway on his customer's motorbike.

Policemen from Shayestaganj Police Station stopped the motorbike and asked them to show necessary papers.

The driver of the motorbike said he could show them after bringing those from home and left the motorbike and Lutfur with police.

The driver, however, did not return and later that night police took Lutfur to the police station.

He alleged that OC Mozammel threatened him with narcotics case if he did not pay the money.



Demonstrators clash with policemen in front of The Assembly of Madrid in Madrid, Spain yesterday, during a demonstration to protest against the new restrictive measures to fight Covid-19. The Madrid region, the epicentre of an explosion of virus infections in Spain, would place a partial lockdown on hundreds of thousands of people. PHOTO: AFP

Asian Paper Mill take steps

FROM PAGE 12

and will abide by the guideline to keep the environment safe," he said.

In August last year, Hathazari upazila administration, along with a DoE team, shut down the paper mill and slapped a Tk 20 lakh fine on it after a probe body found the factory releasing untreated liquid waste into a canal that ends up in the Halda River, causing the death of brood fish and other aquatic life.

The Water Development Board (WDB), under the water resources ministry, submitted their inspection report on August 16, a copy of which The Daily Star obtained.

As part of giving its opinion, WDB visited the factory at Nandihar area of Hathazari upazila towards the end of July where it saw the few steps taken by the management -- including building a retaining wall against the drain via which the waste used to be released, repairing the effluent treatment plant (ETP), building a sludge bed and waste reservoir, and appointing a chemical engineer.

WDB suggested DoE appoint an observer to monitor the activities of the paper mill and submit an observation report after; if satisfactory, permission to resume operations can be given.

Akhil Kumar Biswas, chief engineer of the WDB south eastern zone, Chattogram, who inspected the factory last month, told The Daily Star that in their inspection, they found the ETP to be functioning properly.

"We opined that permission to allow operations could only be given after three months of observation, [after seeing] whether the ETP remains operational or not," he said.

The fisheries and livestock ministry, in its report, opined to allow the factory to resume operations based on three conditions -- monitoring the sludge and waste discharge method for two months, evaluating the standard of water sample of the canal adjacent to the factory, and reusing the water after recycling the waste in

the factory.

Farhana Lovely, Chattogram district fisheries officer, told The Daily Star, "We clearly said their ETP must be functional and DoE can monitor the ETP operation for six months -- if all this is found to be satisfactory, DoE can allow them to resume operations," she said.

AKM Rafique Ahammed, director general of the DoE, told The Daily Star that the honourable High Court formed a committee several months ago to oversee mammals, mother fish, and Halda River's overall biodiversity.

"I asked the committee through a letter to inspect the real condition of the paper mill. We will act in accordance with their recommendations as Asian Paper Mill is known to violate the promise they make," he said.

"Halda is one of the most important rivers... which this year saw the largest amount of eggs hauled in the last 26 years, thanks to the drop in pollution. So, we can't let anyone destroy these," he added.

Deputy Commissioner of Chattogram district administration Md Elias Hossen, who is convener of the committee formed in May this year to protect dolphins, brood fish, and biodiversity of the river, told The Daily Star that the committee will inspect, with experts and concerned officials, the anti-pollution facilities which the factory claims to have reactivated.

"If everything is found to be satisfactory, we will recommend positively. Otherwise, it will remain shut down as it is now."

In 2013, the factory was fined Tk 2 lakh for pollution and a further Tk 1 crore 15 lakh for their ETP being dysfunctional.

DoE also fined the mill Tk 7,98,000 for releasing untreated sludge into a nearby canal in 2015.

Despite repeated action, the factory continued to pollute the canal, prompting DoE to shut it down in August 2019.

Biman waiting to start

FROM PAGE 12

The Caab chief said they have asked the Saudi authorities to know Biman's status and were waiting for a reply.

Sources at Caab said they have given clearance to Biman to resume flight operations to the Middle East country.

Wishing not to be named, an official of Saudi Arabian Airlines on Saturday said they were ready to resume flights from Dhaka from September 23.

The Bangladesh government suspended regular flight operations with all countries, except China, from mid-March to contain Covid-19 spread.

Although regular air communications with some countries have resumed on a limited scale, regular flight operations between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia remained suspended till date.

At present, 13 airlines, including 11 foreign air carriers, are operating 46 weekly flights in seven countries from Bangladesh, said sources.

Saudi Arabia is home to more than 22 lakh Bangladeshis most of them are involved in low-paid work.

The Kingdom is also the prime destination of Bangladeshi migrant workers and the biggest remittance-generating country for Bangladesh.

Many Bangladeshi expatriates came to the country on vacation from Saudi Arabia before the closure of flights amid the pandemic.

They remained stranded as only few chartered and specially arranged flights were operated between the two countries amid the pandemic.

Before the pandemic brought a halt to labour recruitment process, some 1.81 lakh Bangladeshis had new overseas employment between January and March this year.

Of them, 1.33 lakh were employed in Saudi Arabia, said data of Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training.

International flights resumed in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday following the decision of the Saudi authorities to exempt certain categories of Saudis and expatriates from the temporary travel ban imposed since March as part of precautionary measures to stem the spread of coronavirus, reported Saudi Gazette.

In a circular sent to travel agencies and airline companies in the Kingdom on Tuesday, the General Authority of Civil Aviation informed that the airlines are permitted to transport GCC citizens as well as non-Saudi passengers holding a valid visa, including exit and reentry, residency permit (iqama), and visit visas to and from the Kingdom, said the report.

The GACA said all the passengers returning to the Kingdom shall remain in home quarantine for three days and they should undergo another PCR test 48 hours after entering the Kingdom to prove that they are not infected with the coronavirus.

The authority said it would update the guidelines for passengers in line with the approved health protocols, said the Saudi Gazette report.

On September 3, Arab News reported Saudi Arabia's move to resume international flights is meant to revive the country's economy.

"Opening international borders in line with preventative measures" will "help to revive the economies of our countries" and restore hope in beating Covid-19, the Kingdom's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan told a virtual meeting with G20 foreign ministers, said the report.

Daily new cases drop

FROM PAGE 12

"I think transmission is stagnant at a particular place. If there is intervention, coronavirus transmission may be decreased in the days to come. However, we can't say anything firmly."

Urging the DGHS to publish detailed analysis on Covid-19 situation, he said, "We do not know the detailed case analysis of Covid-19 cases or deaths. Also, the number of studies is also too little. We need an overall study to know the situation."

In the previous week, the deaths caused by Covid-19 rose by 5.81 percent compared to the previous [36th] week.

Compared to the previous week, the number of tests decreased by 3.41 percent while the number of recoveries decreased by 21 percent in the 38th week, according to the press release.

On March 8, the DGHS reported the first three Covid-19 cases while the government body reported the first deaths on March 18.

In the past 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday, 26 Covid-19 patients died. Of them, 24 died in hospitals and two in their homes.

With this, the total number of deaths rose to 4,939 which is 1.42 of

all cases detected so far.

A total of 1,544 people tested positive for the viral infection, raising the number of confirmed cases to 348,916.

Against a total of 11,591 tests in those 24 hours, the positivity rate was 13.32 percent, 1.42 percent up from the previous day's 11.9 percent, according to the press release.

As 2,179 patients were added to the recovery list and the total number of recovered patients rose to 256,565. This is more than 73 percent of all detected cases.

Nine of yesterday's deceased were females while 17 were males.

One of the deceased was aged between 21 and 30 years, one between 41 and 50, seven between 51 and 60, and the highest 17 were above 60 years.

One each of them was from Rangpur, Khulna and Rajshahi divisions, four from Chattogram and the rest 19 were from Dhaka division, according to the press release.

Dhaka division saw more than 49 percent of the deceased so far.

According to the press release, 3,006 patients were in general beds in the Covid-19 hospitals across the country and 301 were in ICUs as of yesterday morning.

India's

FROM PAGE 12

public health workers that they have been in contact with someone infectious.

France confirmed nearly 13,500 new cases over a 24-hour period on Saturday, setting another daily record in the number of infections in the country since the coronavirus pandemic began.

The new cases bring the total number of recorded instances of the virus in France to 442,194.

The number of people who have died from the virus also rose by 26 during the same 24-period, bringing the total deaths from Covid-19 in France to 31,274 since March.

The pandemic has killed at least 957,948 people in the world since emerging in China late last year, according to an AFP tally yesterday based on official sources.

More than 30.8 million people have been infected.

The United States has the most deaths with 199,268, followed by Brazil with 136,532, India with 86,752, Mexico with 73,258 and Britain with 41,759.

Belgium passed the 100,000 milestone of infections following a sharp increase in cases in recent weeks, according to figures from the research institute Sciensano.

The trend accelerated markedly in the first half of September, reaching an average of 1,000 new daily infections during the week of September 9 to 15, according to the data.

As dismal as 2018

FROM PAGE 12

lynching and border killings reveal a very gloomy scenario of the overall human rights situation in Bangladesh, observed the report.

It said human rights violation has become the norm in Bangladesh notwithstanding the country's constitutional commitment to safeguarding fundamental rights and its ratification of numerous international treaties and conventions.

"The situation has become so grave that common people feel insecure, whether they are in their bedrooms or on the streets," said the report.

According to the report, at least 396 people were killed extra-judicially in 2019. Of them, 357 people were killed in the name of "crossfire/gunfights", 16 were tortured to death, one was shot to death while 22 died in the custody. The deaths occurred during raids and operations conducted by the law enforcement agencies, the report added.

In 2019, according to the report, a total of 23 persons were "disappeared" by the law enforcement agencies in different incidents.

The report said 45 people were arrested and 49 cases filed under digital security act 2018 last year. Besides, a Journalist was killed, 51 injured, 33 were threatened, 17 were arrested and 7 were assaulted.

Violence against women, in particular, gang rape and child rape are on the rise, said the report that found a total of 1,429 females were raped in 2019, and of them, 595 were adult while alarmingly 834 were children under

the age of 16.

"It's a rising concern in the incidence of raping crime that among victims at least 195 have been gang-raped," the HRSS report observed.

Among the victims, at least 58 were brutally killed after being raped. The report further said 241 girls and women fell victims to sexual harassment and 27 females were injured in acid violence during the period. It is also alarming that in a total of 112 violent incidents against children in 2019, 56 lost their lives and 157 were critically injured. According to the report, in different attacks on minorities, 11 people were injured. Four people fell victim to land grabbing and 38 temples were attacked.

Moreover, at least 49 people were killed and 2863 injured in political violence while around 73 people were killed in public lynchings.

The report further said last year, 42 Bangladeshi citizens were killed by the Indian Border Security Force and two others were killed by Myanmar Border Guard Police in a total of 78 incidents.

"Due to the silence of the Government combined with its submissive foreign policy, border killings have increased," the report observed.

HRSS is deeply concerned about the degradation of the human rights condition in the country. It urges all human rights organisations as well as common citizens to raise their voice to protect and promote human rights in Bangladesh.

 Bangladesh Bank, Head Office Website: www.bb.org.bd		 Invitation for e-Tender
Invitation for Tender No. 45/2020		Date: 17/09/2020
01	Name of procuring entity	: Bangladesh Bank.
02	Invitation for tender for	: Appointing a Service Provider/Man Power Management Contractor to Supply Manpower for the post of Security Guard & others at Head Office and Branch Offices of Bangladesh Bank for 03 (three) years.
03	Invitation Ref. No.	: 45/2020.
04	Procurement method	: Open Tendering Method (OTM); National.
05	Source of fund	: Bangladesh Bank.
06	Tender publication date	: 17/09/2020.
07	Tender closing date and time	: 19/10/2020 at 12:00pm.
08	Tender opening date and time	: 19/10/2020 at 12:15pm.
09	Address of e-Tender	: http://etender.bb.org.bd Tender schedule and other related information will be available at this link.
10	Venue of tender opening	: Office of General Manager, Human Resources Department-1, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka. (intending tenderer or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend).
11	Eligibility of tenderer	: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the Contract under the Applicable Law. Tenderers shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organisations registered in Bangladesh. Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh.
12	Brief description of the services	: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply of total 448 (four hundred forty-eight) Security personnel including 376 (three hundred seventy-six) General Security Guard, 27 (twenty-seven) Special Security Guard (Male), 3 (three) Gunman, 30 (thirty) Special Security Guard (Female) and 12 (twelve) Security Supervisors. Deploy the personnel at the Head Office and branch offices of Bangladesh Bank. Supervise the manpower thereof.
13	Time for completion of work	: 03 (three) years from date of contract (start/effective date as per contract).
14	Tender security amount	: The amount of the Tender Security shall be Tk 25 (twenty-five) lac in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft/Bank Guarantee in favour of General Manager, Human Resources Department-1, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.
15	Name of official inviting tender	: Kazi Aktarul Islam.
16	Designation of official inviting tender	: General Manager, Human Resources Department-1, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.
17	Address of official inviting tender	: Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.
18	Contact details of official inviting tender	: Phone: 02-9530492 E-mail: gm.hrd@bb.org.bd
The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings. DCP: 48/2020-2407 Date: 20/09/2020		
ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।		Kazi Aktarul Islam General Manager Phone: 02-9530492 E-mail: gm.hrd@bb.org.bd
GD-1491		



The Tigers finally reunited as bio-security measures coupled with players testing negative for coronavirus allowed them to resume group training. The Bangladesh Cricket Board arranged the skills camp as players aim to collectively work off the rust with a return to cricket on the cards.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Tigers back training together

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh national team trained as a group at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday after 198 days as members of the preliminary squad for the tour of Sri Lanka converged upon the home of cricket.

Following the group training, the cricketers checked in to a city hotel and will remain in a bio-secure bubble and undergo group training till September 26.

Meanwhile, according to a BCB press release, two cricketers among the 27-member squad who were tested on September 18 and 19 have been identified as "borderline negative" with one of them showing classical Covid-19-like symptoms.

According to the Covid-19 management guidelines and to maintain the bio-secure environment standards, these cricketers along with all the players who have been in close contact with the symptomatic cricketer recently, have been isolated until the next test on September 22.

Earlier, BCB's chief physician Dr Debashish Chowdhury explained the bio-secure plan which is along the lines of the England and Wales Cricket Board and the ICC health guidelines, with frequent testing being a feature.

He also added that hotel, transportation, restaurant, training facilities and medical facilities of the players and staff will all be kept inside a bubble for the week-long residential camp.

The cricketers had been training individually since August, and started their skills training as a

group yesterday under head coach Russell Domingo.

The experienced Mahmudullah Riyad -- who will be looking to make a comeback in the Test side -- was excited to be back to the field as a unit yesterday.

"We started individual sessions around four or five weeks ago, so got a lot of time to work on personal things. I spoke to the batting coach [back then] and worked as per his guidelines. Now we are working as a team. The team is excited to be back; as at the end of the day it is a team game and it is useful when you got to enjoy the work with the colleagues," Mahmudullah told the media following practice.

"The time during lockdown was tough because we were away from the team and the field. We had to stay busy with running and gym but not skills practice. We had individual sessions for a few weeks

and are now training as a team."

Meanwhile, BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury on Saturday said they are expecting to hear from SLC in the next couple of days about the fate of the three-match Test series, which is part of the ICC Test Championship.

Although SLC is yet to provide the revised health protocols, according to BCB officials their Sri Lankan counterparts are on track and are hopeful of getting the green signal and continuing preparations for the tour.

If the tour finally gets the green light, Bangladesh are expected to travel to Colombo on September 27, one month before the series begins with the first Test on October 24.

The first two Tests are likely to be played in Kandy while the third and the final Test of the series is expected to held in Colombo.

Salahuddin's panel reveal lofty manifesto

SPORTS REPORTER



Kazi Salahuddin-led Combined Panel set a lofty target to bring Bangladesh national team around the mark of 150 FIFA ranking in next four years as it announced a 36-point manifesto under five segments during introduction of panel candidates for Bangladesh Football Federation's (BFF) October 3 polls at a hotel in the capital yesterday.

The five segments include the national team, domestic football, women's football, development projects and technical areas. The manifesto includes some of the routine works such as holding leagues and tournaments at all levels, hunting talent and coaches' courses. However, it unfortunately does not make any promise to bring professionalism into clubs -- a key component of football development.

The declaration of manifesto highlighted Salahuddin's past 12 years instead of focusing on the successes and failures of the last four years. The last four years saw Bangladesh hit the lowest FIFA ranking in its history and the national football team was eliminated from the group stages of SAFF Championship for the fourth consecutive time and failed to reach the final of Bangabandhu Gold Cup twice.

"When I came to the BFF in 2008, Bangladesh was at 180 FIFA Ranking and now it's 187. FIFA ranking depends on a lot of things and playing friendly matches is important. We could not play friendly matches for three years due to the financial structure but we are now playing friendlies and we are at 187," Salahuddin said. "I don't agree that we could not produce good players. The players don't get media exposure; media instead talks to former players who retired from football some 20 to 25 years ago."

In 2008, Bangladesh were at 174 FIFA ranking and next year it moved up to 149 following some good results at international level, but since then it has been a downward spiral, hitting 197th in

2017 following a disastrous World Cup qualifying campaign, where they were eliminated after defeat against Bhutan.

Denying the 2016 election manifesto as his own, Salahuddin said, "We have covered 70 to 75 percent of 2016 manifesto which was, however, not my manifesto as many things that I recommended were not included. That manifesto was basically Tarafder Ruhul Amin's. But this time the manifesto has been prepared for three months and it includes two new tournaments, namely Sheikh Kamal U-18/19 and Sheikh Russel U-10 national tournaments."

More than half the agenda of the 2016 election manifesto included strengthening clubs' age-group teams, development youth football under BFF supervision, resuming Sylhet Football Academy, hunting talents across the country and nursing them at home before sending selected ones aboard for a strong pipeline for the national team. Unfortunately, the Salahuddin-led committee failed to achieve any of those in the last term.

This time, the manifesto only mentions of continuing the Fortis-BFF Academy, which is now non-functional. The manifesto also promises setting up technical centres in Dhaka and beyond and establishing football centres across the country for non-residential training of budding footballers.

Asked about the allegation of harassment of president candidate Badal Roy, Salahuddin said, "I have not talked to the election commission regarding anything yet. There is no question of influencing the election commission. I know the election commission and Badal Roy would come in my favour if I put pressure, but I won't misuse my power. I am powerful but I don't misuse power. Now election commission will decide."

Chief coordinator of the panel, Chattogram Abahani secretary general Alhaz Shamsul Hoque Chowdhury, praised Salahuddin highly but criticised two other president candidates -- Badal Roy and Shafiqul Islam Manik -- heavily.



'It's all love now'

REUTERS, London



Arsenal match-winner Eddie Nketiah has mended fences with team mate Dani Ceballos after a standoff between the pair a week ago was forgotten as they linked up to secure a 2-1 victory over West Ham United in the Premier League on Saturday.

During the warm-up before Arsenal's match at newly-promoted Fulham last week, Nketiah, 21, and Ceballos, 24, were seen to clash briefly, in a clip widely shared on social media. But they seem to have set their differences aside since then and on Saturday at The Emirates the Spaniard laid off the ball for England Under-21 captain Nketiah to score.

Speaking about the clash with Ceballos and the goal, Nketiah told Sky Sports: "We had a bit of a coming together. The reaction was there. We made up and got on



with it. It was a great pass across, good vision. I tried to stay inside. It was an easy finish from there. It was nice for him to make the assist - it's all love now," he added.

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta praised Nketiah's contribution as a substitute and suggested it was an example other players who want time on the pitch should follow. "It's so important for him and the team as well. It's a message to everyone on the bench that they have a mission when they come on," he told reporters.

Asked about the Nketiah-Ceballos incident last week, Arteta gave a light-hearted response. "That's the beauty of this sport. Today they found a way to understand each other," he said.

The Hammers were denied a penalty for handball inside the box, almost a carbon copy of what had cost Victor Lindelof and Manchester United a penalty earlier in the day.

"I definitely think we should have had a penalty," West Ham manager Moyes said about a handball. "But we don't know the rules, really, do we?" "Not to be rewarded with some points tonight is really hard on us," added Moyes. "For us just to turn off in the last five minutes, it's criminal."



FACE SAYS IT ALL: Erling Haaland scored twice and teenager Giovanni Reyna added another as Borussia Dortmund made a perfect start with a 3-0 win over Borussia Muenchengladbach in their Bundesliga opener on Saturday. Some 9,300 fans were allowed into the Signal Iduna Park, making it the best-attended game in Germany since coronavirus restrictions took hold in March.

PHOTO: TWITTER

Barto not seeking 'conflict'

AGENCIES



An early strike from Antoine Griezmann gave Barcelona a 1-0 win at home to Elche their final pre-season friendly on Saturday, with club president Josep Maria Bartomeu saying afterwards that he did not want 'any conflict' with Lionel Messi.

The Argentine played a defence-splitting ball to Jordi Alba in the second minute, whose cut-back found an unmarked Griezmann.

"I won't get into any conflict with him [Messi]. He's our captain and leader," Bartomeu said. "I couldn't let him leave the club, he is the best player of all time and the team needs him. Having Messi is a guarantee of success."

"We have seen him do his talking on the pitch and we have moved on from the saga," Bartomeu added. "We should



congratulate ourselves for getting Messi to stay with us and for how he has behaved in the last few days. The best player in the world should stay at our home."

Koeman surprisingly left home-grown midfielder Riqui Puig out of the squad, saying after the game that he would prefer the player to go

out on loan as he would not get many chances this season.

Bartomeu also ruled out resigning, despite a vote of no-confidence against him looming.

"The board and I will keep working to ensure we have the most competitive team possible," he said. "We will speak again after validating the votes but right now no-one wants to quit. The club won't stop and we will keep working, we have lots of issues to sort out."

Dhoni a 'genius'

REUTERS



England all-rounder Sam Curran termed Chennai Super Kings captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni a "genius" after justifying his surprise promotion in the batting order in their IPL opener against Mumbai Indians on Saturday.

After Ravindra Jadeja fell in the 19th over, leaving Chennai needing 29 off 17 deliveries, former India captain Dhoni or fellow right-hander Kedar Jadhav was expected to join Faf du Plessis in the middle.

Dhoni sent Curran instead and the 22-year-old clobbered two sixes and a four in his six-ball cameo before Chennai triumphed by five wickets with four balls to spare.

"To be honest, very surprised I went in but he's a genius, he obviously thought something," Curran said at Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Zayed Stadium. "A great win in the end."

The left-handed batsman reckoned his promotion was partly because Dhoni wanted a left-right combination and said his aggression against left-arm spinner Krunal Pandya was premeditated.

"That was the over we wanted to target - a six or out approach mentality. Take the risk, and if it comes off it comes off, if it doesn't, it doesn't."

No excuses, says Nadal

AGENCIES

Clay court king Rafael Nadal crashed out of the Italian Open on Saturday, falling to a straight sets defeat to Argentine Diego Schwartzman in a tournament the Spaniard had won nine times.

Eight-seeded Schwartzman meted out a punishing 6-2, 7-5 loss in Nadal's final warm-up before his bid for a 13th



French Open, and record-equalling 20th Grand Slam in just over a week.

Men's top seed Novak Djokovic also stumbled on the Roman clay but recovered to win 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 against German qualifier Dominik Koepfer.

"We can find excuses, but I didn't play well enough. Then we have to think internally, 'Why? How I can fix it?'" the 34-year-old told reporters. "Now is not the moment to find excuses. It's just to accept that I didn't play well enough."

"It was not my night. He played a great match, I think, and I didn't. These things can happen. After such a long time without competing, I played two good matches, and now I played a bad one against a good opponent."

"That's how it is. I just want to congratulate Diego and I'm going to keep working."



Tottenham Hotspur's Korean forward Son Heung-min celebrates one of his four goals with Harry Kane during a 5-2 rout of Southampton at the St Mary's Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS



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

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT BSRM building a safer nation



GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM

SHAH CEMENT

Biman waiting to start flights to KSA

Resumption to be a relief for stranded migrants

RASHIDUL HASAN and JAMIL MAHMUD

Biman Bangladesh Airlines is waiting for the response from the Saudi Arabia authorities to operate flights in the Gulf country as international flight operations between the two countries are expected to resume soon.

The resumption of air communications will bring much relief to thousands of Bangladeshi migrant workers living in the Kingdom, many of whom got stranded at home amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Saudi Arabia opened international flight operations on Tuesday. The move was aimed at reviving the Gulf country's economy, according to media reports.

A top official of Biman, the national flag carrier, on Saturday said they have been planning to resume flight operations to Saudi Arabia soon.

Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman, chairman of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Caab), yesterday said Biman sought permission from the Saudi authorities to operate schedule flights from Dhaka, but the Saudi authorities were yet to respond.

Meanwhile, Caab has given permission to Saudi Arabian Airlines to operate two weekly flights from Dhaka after the airlines sought permission to operate seven flights a week.

Caab, however, might cancel the permission for Saudi airlines if the Saudi authorities do not allow Biman to operate flights to the Kingdom.

Operating flight to a country is "reciprocal", he added.

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Lighter vessel MV Golam, which sustained a breach in its hull on way to Jashore on June 21, is beached near the coastline of Patenga in Chattogram. Two vessels rendered unusable after damage from accidents are near the beach. Owners are often reluctant to dismantle these vessels in accordance with environmental rules and regulations.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

As dismal as 2018

Says HRSS 2019 report on Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The annual report of the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS) on the human rights situation in Bangladesh in 2019 shows that the overall condition of human rights is as dismal as it was in 2018.

"Political and civil society space continues to be curtailed. Security forces continue to enjoy impunity in cases of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and arbitrary arrests," said the report that was sent to media yesterday.

The report was prepared on the rights situation from January to December last year based on data collected from national dailies and fact-finding reports prepared by country-wide representatives.

The report will soon be published.

The rising incidents of rape, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearance, violent attacks, public

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

HALDA RIVER POLLUTION Asian Paper Mill take measures to restart operations

Fisheries, water resources ministry place conditions for resumption

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

Asian Paper Mill, which last year was found to be a major factory responsible for polluting the Halda River, possibly the lone natural breeding ground of carp fish in South Asia, is accelerating its efforts to resume operations.

The factory management recently sought permission from the Department of Environment (DoE) claiming to have restored facilities to contain the pollution.

On July 23, DoE sought an opinion from both the Ministry of Water Resources and the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock in this regard, as the river was declared "Bangabandhu Fish Heritage" last year, following the factory's written request.

MA Salam, managing director of the factory, told The Daily Star that they have met the requirements stipulated by DoE and two teams formed by the department have already visited the plant and found everything to be in compliance.

"We hope to resume operations soon

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Food must reach affected areas in time



British Minister Geoffrey Rippon calls on Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Gono Bhaban on September 21, 1972.

September 21, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

HIGH LEVEL FOOD CONFERENCE AT GONO BHABAN

A high-level conference held at the Gono Bhaban today reviews the food situation in the country. Presided over by Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the conference is attended by Food Minister Phani Bhushan Majumdar and Communications Minister Mansur Ali. Besides, high officials of the two ministries attend the conference.



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OC, 4 cops closed for taking bribe

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Five policemen of Shayestaganj Police Station, including the officer-in-charge, were closed yesterday for their alleged involvement in taking bribe and releasing a man during his detention in Habiganj.

A three-member probe committee was formed on Thursday to investigate the allegation and it was asked to submit its report within yesterday night.

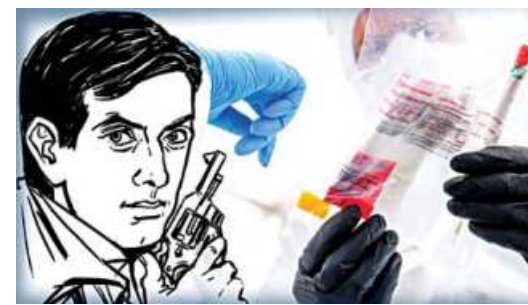
Police, however, did not provide any details of the report as of 7:08pm last night.

Mohammad Ullah, superintendent of Habiganj police, told The Daily Star that the allegation was proven primarily.

Anwar Hossain, additional superintendent (ASP) of Habiganj police, said departmental actions would be taken against the accused if the allegations were proven.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Covid-19 test kit 'Feluda' gets green light



OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India has given green signal to the commercial launch of a new coronavirus-detection technology named after master director Satyajit Ray's iconic detective Feluda also known as Prodosh Mitter.

"Feluda", the Tata CRISPR (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats) Covid-19 test has received regulatory approvals from the Drug Controller General of India, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) said late Saturday night.

The name "Feluda" has been given because of the sleuth's pinpoint accuracy for zeroing in on criminals.

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RAPE OF DU STUDENT Trial of lone accused begins

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The trial of the case -- filed against Md Majnu for the rape of a Dhaka University student in the capital's Kurmitola area -- began at a Dhaka tribunal yesterday with the deposition of the complainant.

Judge Begum Mosammat Quamrunnahar of the Women and Children's Repression Prevention Tribunal-7 recorded the statement.

Later, the witness was cross-examined by the defence lawyer on behalf of the accused.

Court sources said the complainant earlier narrated the incident before the tribunal and demanded exemplary punishment for the accused.

The tribunal fixed today for next hearing of the case.

The tribunal also asked the victim to appear before it the same day to give her deposition.

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Daily new cases drop

MOUJIB AHMED SUJAN

Comparing with the previous epidemiological week, the number of new Covid-19 cases have drastically decreased.

The detection of coronavirus cases decreased by 9.22 percent while the deaths also decreased by 17.25 percent as of yesterday which was the 38th epidemiological week, read a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Experts, however, said the situation could not be observed based on this narrow definition only.

Prof Nazrul Islam, member of the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Covid-19, yesterday said,

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Using a megaphone, two Red Crescent officials asking people to maintain health guidelines yesterday as the wave of Covid-19 is not over in the country. They also gave masks to those who did not have them. This photo was taken on Satmasjid Road in the capital's Dhanmondi.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

India's infections surge to 5.4m

England imposes up to \$13,000 fine for breaking Covid rules; France sees another record daily rise

AGENCIES

India's coronavirus case tally surged to 5.4 million as it added 92,605 new infections in the last 24 hours, data from the federal health ministry showed yesterday.

The country has posted the highest single-day caseload in the world since early August, and lags behind only the United States, which has 6.7 million cases in terms of total infections.

A total of 1,113 people died of Covid-19 in the last 24 hours, India's health ministry said, taking mortalities to 86,752, which is a relatively low 1.6% of all cases.

In Europe, Britain is at a tipping point on Covid-19, health minister Matt Hancock said yesterday, warning that a second national lockdown could be imposed if people don't follow government rules.

Covid-19 cases have risen sharply in recent weeks to more than 4,000 per day. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has called it a second wave and stricter lockdown measures have been introduced in areas across the country - with London possibly next in line.

"The nation faces a tipping point and we have a choice," Hancock told Sky News. "The choice is either that everybody follows the rules ... or we will have to take more measures."

People who refuse to self-isolate to stop the spread of coronavirus could face fines of up to 10,000 British pounds (\$13,000) under tough new regulations announced to tackle a surge in cases.

The rules will apply from September 28 to anyone in England who tests positive for the virus or is notified by

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PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 21

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-40 12-45 4-30 6-05 7-30
JAMAT 5-15 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION