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Star ON FRIDAY

ON FRIDAY



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**"The president of the United States conducted himself the way he did -- I think it was a national embarrassment."**  
JOE BIDEN ON TRUMP'S ABRASIVE PERFORMANCE IN THE FIRST US PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE PAGE 6



**"Putin is behind this act, I don't see any other explanation."**  
KREMLIN CRITIC ALEXEI NAVALNY ACCUSES RUSSIAN PRESIDENT OVER POISONING PAGE 6



**"Humanity is waging war on nature. And we need to rebuild our relationship with it."**  
UN CHIEF ANTONIO GUTERRES TELLS BIODIVERSITY SUMMIT PAGE 6

## ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING LAW Amend it to curb cops' raid powers

Foreign minister writes to law minister, seeks an end to 'harassment' of recruiting agencies

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and ZYMA ISLAM

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has lately written to Law Minister Anisul Huq seeking amendment to the trafficking prevention law, to potentially leash the capacity of law enforcers in raiding recruitment agencies.

There were complaints about "abuse of the law" and "harassment" of recruitment agencies by the law enforcers in recent times, the minister said in his September 21 letter.

The section of the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012 which the foreign minister wants amended, is Section 20 (1) and (2), titled "Preventive search and seizure".

The section allows the law enforcement agencies the "power to conduct preventive search, to enter into any premises and to seize any equipment or proof or document used or likely to be used in the commission of any offence under this Act."

The section states that the "search may be undertaken without a warrant if there is reasonable ground to believe that there are equipment or materials for the commission of any offence under this Act". It also adds that two civilian witnesses must be present at the operation.

Foreign Minister Momen stated in the letter that the anti-trafficking law was enacted to prevent human trafficking, prosecute human traffickers, and protect victims, while the "Overseas Employment and Migrants Act 2013" is used to fairly regulate the manpower export industry. "A conflicting provision in the two laws is creating obstacles in manpower export," he wrote.

"Section 20(1) and (2) of the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act, 2012 allows the law enforcers uninterrupted power, and

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Wearing masks and maintaining physical distancing, a group of A-Level students waits to enter a British Council-approved test centre in the capital's Dhanmondi area around 11:00pm yesterday. Advanced Level examinations of the October and November session began yesterday amid the pandemic, leaving many candidates and their guardians in anxiety over health safety.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## A-LEVEL EXAMS Students negotiate a new reality

Maintain health safety protocol at exam halls

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Advanced Level examinations of the October and November session began yesterday amid parents' concern about the grades their children would get as many could not prepare for the tests properly due to the closure of schools.

Many were worried not only about the health safety at exam halls but also on their way to and from the exam centre.

"We are worried about what grade my child will get ... She could not concentrate on her studies. I had advised her to adjust to the situation," said a guardian waiting outside Oxford International School exam centre in the capital.

Anjum Ara said as school remained closed SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## Dhaka, Beijing can strengthen ties further

Hasina writes to Xi Jinping on occasion of China's 71st founding anniversary

UNB, Dhaka

Terming China one of the most valued partners of Bangladesh for its socio-economic development, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has appreciated the East Asian country's continued aid and support to Bangladesh during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

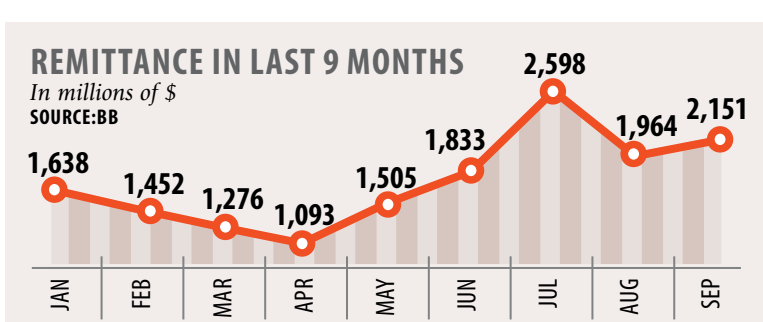
The premier sent a congratulatory message to Chinese President Xi Jinping on the occasion of the 71st founding anniversary of the People's Republic of China. She conveyed heartfelt felicitations and warmest greetings to the government and the people of China.

Hasina also recalled President Xi's visit to Bangladesh in 2016 and hers to China in 2019 -- one elevating bilateral relations to Strategic Partnership of Cooperation and the other bringing the two friendly

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## Remittance inflow defies grim forecast

Expats sending last savings before returning home might be a reason, say experts



JAMIL MAHMUD and AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

Despite grim predictions, remittance inflow stayed strong for the fourth straight month as expatriates sent home \$2.15 billion last month, giving the country's economy some relief amid the pandemic.

The inflow went up by 9.53 percent from the previous month and 45.64pc from September last year, according to Bangladesh Bank data.

Experts attributed the rise in remittance to the government's two percent cash incentive for remitters.

They said the cash incentive, being disbursed since July last year, has encouraged remitters to send money through the formal channels, at a

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## Closure of edn institutions extended till October 31

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a bid to reduce further spread of Covid-19, the government has extended the closure of all educational institutions till October 31.

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education issued separate statements regarding the matter yesterday.

Both the ministries suggested students and participate in TV education and online education programmes during the shutdown.

The ministries also urged guardians to ensure safe stay of students at home.

Earlier on Wednesday, Education Minister Dipu Moni said the situation was not in favour of reopening schools.

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## 3 CHINA-FUNDED RAIL PROJECTS PMO to review plans and costs

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The Prime Minister's Office has formed a committee to review negotiated contract costs of three railways projects and whether the projects should go ahead as they have been planned.

The projects were supposed to be implemented with Chinese finance and by Chinese companies.

The decision came at a meeting held Wednesday at the PMO over four projects that have Chinese links. Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Ahmad Kaikaus chaired the meeting.

The committee, led by Shamima Nargis of the physical infrastructure division of the Planning Commission, would have members from the railways ministry, Bangladesh Railway (BR), Economic Relations Division (ERD), and Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED).

The Daily Star learnt about the developments from five railways officials who sought anonymity.

"The committee will review all three projects. It will review both cost and technical issues," one of the officials said.

Conversion of metre-gauge rail into dual-gauge between Akhaura and Sylhet; construction of dual-gauge double line between Joydebpur and Ishwardi; and construction

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## Taqsem Khan reappointed as Wasa MD for 3 more years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ignoring widespread criticism, the government yesterday reappointed Taqsem A Khan as the Dhaka Wasa managing director for three more years.

The move came after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina approved the appointment put forward by the Wasa board.

Mohammad Ibrahim, additional secretary (water supply wing) of Local Government Division, said the PM has approved the file.

The LGRD and cooperatives ministry yesterday issued a circular mentioning that Taqsem was reappointed for the next three years from October 14.

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CLINICAL TRIAL OF VACCINE

## Globe Biotech plans to start it this month

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Bangladeshi company Globe Biotech will seek government approval to start clinical trials of its Covid-19 vaccine this month, having already completed successful animal trials in the pre-clinical stage.

The company will seek approval through a contract research organisation (CRO) to start the first phase of human trials of the vaccine to examine whether the dose is safe and effective for humans.

The pharmaceutical company claimed they have gotten encouraging results from pre-clinical trials, initially done on rabbits and then mice.

The pre-clinical trial results were pre-published in the international platform, bioRxiv.org -- an archive for unpublished pre-prints in life sciences, and the company is likely to hold a press conference in this regard early next week.

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## TROOPS MOBILISATION ON BORDER Myanmar putting kind of pressure on us

### Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat talks to Star

Brig Gen (retd) Sakhawat talks to Star

Bangladesh has expressed its concern to the UN Security Council over the recent deployment of Myanmar troops on the Bangladesh border. Tensions on the Bangladesh-Myanmar border are mainly centring the Rohingya crisis, a creation of Myanmar. Does Myanmar want to create war-like situation? How is Bangladesh's preparations, ability and strength? How significant is the Bangladesh-Myanmar relations in international and regional politics? The Daily Star's Golam Mortoza turned to military and security expert Brigadier General (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain to have an in-depth analysis of Bangladesh-Myanmar relations.

Following is an excerpt of the interview:

TDS: Why is Myanmar raising tension along the border now?

MSH: First of all, I would like to say that I am speaking based on my long research and observations. You can say, this is my own experience-based analysis.

For this we have to look at the international situation. Tensions are running high over India's border conflict with China. From Myanmar's point of view, it cannot be kept out of this tension.

The polarisation with the United States, Australia, and Japan behind India against China is also there. In this, it



seems Bangladesh is neither here nor there. But one thing very noticeable is that US Secretary of Defence Mark Esper suddenly called Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina. This is a big issue in the geopolitical context. Bangladesh is being dragged into the US-Australia-Japan-India pole. A number of unconfirmed sources, especially in various international media, reported that they [US] apparently want to sell some sophisticated war equipment to Bangladesh which include Apache helicopters that have been discussed at different times. They [US] also want to assist in necessary training. India

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## 21 more die from Covid in a day

Another 1,508 infected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-one people died from Covid-19 in the country in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, according to a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The total number of deaths reached 5,272, and the death rate was 1.44 percent.

In the meantime, 1,508 new infections were recorded, taking the number of people infected to 3,64,987, added the release.

Against yesterday's 11,420 tests, the positivity rate was 13.20 percent, and the overall positivity rate stood at 18.63 percent.

Bangladesh is currently the 15th in the list of worst-affected countries in the world in terms of the number of cases.

The position is one step ahead of Iraq and one step behind the United Kingdom, according to worldometers.info.

In the same 24 hours, SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

In fond remembrance of a life, lived truly and well  
Iftekhar Uddin Ahmed (Ifti)

(August 27th 1950 - October 2nd 2015)  
Founding Chairman Bonanza Group of Companies and Raj Overseas Ltd

The memories of your calm strength, your indelible smile, and your unflinching fortitude guide us through these trying times.

We ask all friends and family to remember him in their prayers.