



The Daily Star



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"We'd be wrong if we think that rape is a matter of law and justice. It'd be a mistake to assume that a law passed in parliament will reduce the number of rape incidents."
SHIREEN HUQ OF NARIPOKKHO AT A PROTEST RALLY



I think we could lose the White House and both houses of Congress, that it could be a bloodbath of Watergate proportions."
US REPUBLICAN SENATOR TED CRUZ



"I wish good health to all the people around the world who are fighting the ills of the evil virus."
NORTH KOREA LEADER KIM JONG UN



Washing hands of workers' plight

While trafficked workers thrown into jail, recruiting agents remain untouched with no authentic paperwork to prove links

ZYMA ISLAM

While 81 migrant workers returning from Vietnam were incarcerated for more than a month, before finally being released from prison over this past week, the recruiting agents who sent them to the Southeast Asian country in the first place are going scot-free and denying all claims of trafficking.

They are emboldened by the fact that such workers' recruitment, employment, and paper processing are dealt with by up to three layers of recruiting agents.

Often the agency who represents a worker on his/her emigration clearance -- that means the agency officially sending the worker abroad -- has never even met the worker or seen the worker's paperwork.

So, in the case of the migrant workers returning from Vietnam, all paper trails point back to the agency listed on the emigration clearance -- the agency the worker had never met and has little evidence against.

These agencies are now denying trafficking charges, saying they had not even met the workers and their licences were misused by others.

Meanwhile, the intermediary agencies too are flat-out denying sending the

workers to Vietnam, confident that the only thread linking them to this trafficking are the workers' verbal testimonies.

Over the last few months, Brac's Migration Programme unit interviewed 120 migrant workers in Vietnam to map out the actors involved.

By collecting the Bureau of Manpower, Employer and Training (BMET) smart cards from the workers, they found that 11 recruiting agencies were involved in getting these workers' emigration clearances.

Through worker testimonials, Brac identified a further 11 agencies involved in passport and visa processing, as well as 52 local recruiting agents.

BMET clearance records collected by Brac link M/S A Jhama Trade International with sending at least 28 workers, who did not get their promised jobs, to Vietnam.

The clearances stated the workers were employed for 13 Vietnamese companies; apart from one company -- Nam Phuong Xanh Company Ltd based in the city of Vung Tau -- none of the other companies have a digital presence.

However, the proprietor of M/S A Jhama Trade International, Shanto Das, claimed

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People from all walks of life, including activists of different rights organisations, protest in front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, demanding reforms in the country's rape law.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

HSC: TECHNICAL EDU BOARD Uncertainty over grading of 2.8 lakh

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Around 2.8 lakh Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) students, under Bangladesh Technical Education Board, are uncertain as to how they would be graded in the newly adapted HSC grading system.

The students take courses like HSC Vocational, HSC Business Management, and Diploma in Commerce that require them to sit for the final exams after finishing grade XI.

The scores of their final exams get added to their HSC results, said at least two officials of the technical education board.

"We are facing some difficulties. It is still uncertain how we will evaluate these candidates without their final exams' scores," said a top official of the board.

It is decided that their results would be announced based on their JSC and SSC results. However, we are yet to know about what to do with the final exam scores of these students, the official added.

The government on Wednesday decided to cancel this year's HSC and its equivalent exams due to health-safety concerns amid the coronavirus crisis.

Instead, candidates would be evaluated based on their

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Covid-19 death toll now 5.5k

23 die, 1,203 test positive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Covid-19 death toll reached 5,500 as the health directorate reported 23 deaths in the past 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

The daily death toll was at its peak between June and August, shows DGHS data, with June 30 seeing the highest, 64, number of deaths.

This daily figure has largely been below 30 from the beginning of September till date.

A health expert said the transmission of coronavirus continues with no intervention and may accelerate as the cold season approaches.

The total number of confirmed cases rose to 3,77,073 as the DGHS

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'Death penalty not a solution'

Demo in front of JS calls for drastic reform of laws to end rape culture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-rape protests continued across the country for the sixth consecutive day yesterday as different socio-cultural and rights organisations took to the streets to condemn the growing incidents of rape, sexual harassment and violence against women.

In Dhaka, protests were held in Shahbagh, Manik Mia Avenue and National Press Club areas.

In front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, activists from different organisations, including those working for women's rights, staged demonstrations.

The protesters were chanting slogans condemning the impunity of rapists and demanding prompt action to bring the rapists to book.

They were holding placards inscribed with slogans such as: "Stop protecting rapists", "Mukti chai, Rokkha Noi", "If you justify rape, you are a rapist too."

Before the programme started, police obstructed the protesters saying they would not allow demonstrations there, after which more protesters joined and began chanting slogans.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Man arrested over gang-rape of teen

Indigenous community protest student's murder after rape in Dinajpur

STAR REPORT

Against a backdrop of ongoing countrywide outrage and protests against rape, the prime accused of a gang-rape of a teenage girl from Lalmonirhat was arrested on Friday night, and a demonstration was held yesterday demanding justice for the murder of a woman in Dinajpur, killed allegedly after rape.

From Patgram, Lalmonirhat, the 15-year-old orphan was travelling from her aunt's house to an uncle's house at Kaunia upazila in Rangpur by train on the evening of October 6.

When the train arrived at Kakina Railway Station in Kaliganj upazila, the girl

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MARITAL RAPE, CHILD MARRIAGE Issues that are now even more pressing

NILIMA JAHAN and ZYMA ISLAM

No conversation about rape is complete without recognising this: marital rape, and underage marriage "under special circumstances" are both legal in this country.

As it currently stands, girl children can be forced into sexual relationships without their consent as long as the perpetrator is legally married to them, even though it amounts to marital rape.

Underage marriage is allowed under Section 19 of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, which states, "... if a marriage is solemnised in such a manner and under such special circumstances as may be prescribed by rules in the best interests of the minor, at the directions of the court and with consent of the parents or the guardian of the minor, as the case may be, it shall not be deemed to be an offence under this act."

Critics of the law have pointed out time and again that "special circumstances" are not defined. The law also does not mention when and how a court can make such exceptions.

And as per Section 375 of the Penal Code, "Sexual

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Beyond public knowledge, Panchakhanda Basudeva Angan, a 1,000-year-old temple in Supatala village of Sylhet's Beanibazar, houses two more statues -- one of a Dhyani (meditating left bottom) Buddha and another of a Garudashin Vishnu (Lord Vishnu sitting or riding on Garuda, a mythical bird-like creature) -- alongside one Basudeva statue.

PHOTO: TARUN SARKER, SAGAR DAS CHOWDHURY

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On the road to ANCIENT SRIHATTA Two ages-old statues found in Sylhet temple open new avenue of study

TARUN SARKER

As per the record, Panchakhanda Basudeva Angan, a millennium-old temple in Supatala village of Sylhet's Beanibazar, housed only a Basudeva statue.

Beyond public knowledge, however, two more unrecorded ancient statues are kept in the historic temple.

During a visit to the temple in late June, the statues of a Dhyani (meditating) Buddha and a Garudashin Vishnu (Lord Vishnu sitting or riding on Garuda, a mythical bird-like creature) were found.

The Basudeva statue, depicting Lord Vishnu in Samapadasthanak posture in which the feet are firmly arid squarely planted, was mentioned in various journals while the two other statues remained unheard of.

In Achyut Charan Choudhury's book "Srihatter Itibritta", some publications of Bangladesh Asiatic Society, and a memorandum published by the temple in 2006 state that there is only the Basudeva statue in the temple.

But the expedition found all three statues are kept in the Sri-Mandir of the Panchakhanda Basudeva Angan and being worshipped.

Finding of the Dhyani Buddha proves the existence of Mahayana Buddhist while the Garudashin Vishnu is the only statue of its type to be found in the region.

Two neighbouring villages, Supatala and Nidhanpur, under Panchakhanda Pargana of ancient Srihatta, are very much known to historians and archaeologists. These places are crucial for understanding the ancient time of greater Sylhet.



This fallen tree branch covered with clothes of all kinds is located at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan, which has remained closed due to the pandemic. However, just because the gates are locked doesn't mean there is no one there, as floating people are taking advantage of the situation by occupying the park with their belongings. This photo was taken on Friday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Children speak their minds

Taking part in online dialogue, they seek justice for rape, killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Children from different districts in the country demanded justice for the recent killings and rapes in an online dialogue yesterday.

They also highlighted the issues of physical abuse and mental health of children, early marriage, drugs, cyber bullying and safety measures taken against those, said a press release.

They placed those topics before the officials of the ministries of social welfare and women and children affairs, who were present at the event.

As a part of World Children's Day and Child Rights Week-2020, Save the Children, Bangladesh in association with six other organisations arranged the programme.

The week is being observed from October 5 to 11. Speaking as the chief guest, State Minister for Social Welfare Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru said his ministry will stand beside the children to fulfil their logical demands.

If any non-government organisation is interested in working for the underprivileged children, the ministry will extend their helping hand, he added.

Onno Van Manen, country director of Save the Children in Bangladesh, stressed the importance of a state and its responsibilities towards children in their overall development.

He pointed out that child labour, violence, early marriage are the drawbacks in establishing the rights of the children.

Reassuring the attendees, Rafiqul Islam, director general of the Social Welfare Department, said the department is committed in ensuring child rights.

He also reminded the children to use the online platform with caution.

Women and Children Affairs Ministry Joint Secretary Md Mohibuzzaman and Director of Child Rights Governance and Child Protection, Save the Children in Bangladesh Abdullah Al Mamun were also present at the programme, among others.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on October 5 inaugurated the World Children's Day and Child Rights

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95 waterways accidents killed 149 in 3 months

Says report by 2 orgs

UNB, Dhaka

Although launch capsizes have decreased, accidents involving different types of vessels take place on inland waterways round the year, and deaths continue, said a report of two non-government organisations yesterday.

At least 149 people, including 22 women and 44 children, were killed, while 26 were injured and 58 remained missing in a total of 95 waterway accidents in the last three months.

The 58 missing victims were considered deceased, as they were not found, later raising the death toll to 207, revealed a survey of Green Club of Bangladesh (GCB) and National Committee to Protect Shipping, Roads and Railways.

The fatal accidents took place in different inland waterways and coastal areas between July 1 and September 30 across the country.

The survey was conducted by taking information from 24 national and 10 regional dailies, and nine news portals and agencies, says a press release.

The report said 86 people, including 10 women and 31 children,

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Law, enforcement of HC guidelines urgent

Speakers tell webinar on emergency medical services for road accident victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Formulation of law and enforcement of High Court guidelines are needed to ensure emergency medical services for road accident victims, speakers have said at a webinar.

While sharing statistics, Taqbir Huda, research specialist at Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), presented a comparative analysis between the HC guidelines on such emergency medical services and provisions endorsed by the Road Transport Act, 2018.

"Provision no-13 of the guideline ensures protection of people who volunteer to help the road accident victims from police harassment and from obligation to give testimony before the court. Again, provision 14 states that it is the duty of police officers to ensure treatment for road accident victims. If ambulance is not available, police will use their own vehicles to take the victims to the nearest hospital. However, these provisions are not covered by the Road Transport Act, 2018," said Taqbir.

The Daily Star, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust and ALAP jointly organised the webinar titled "Emergency Medical Services for Road Accident Victims" on October 9.

Barrister Sara Hossain, a Supreme Court lawyer; Dr Ashraf Uddin Ahmed, resident physician and assistant professor, in charge of medical emergency, BIRDEM; and Ilias Kanchan, Nirapad Sarak Chai chairman, spoke at the webinar.

It was moderated by Advocate Rashna Imam, founder, Academy of Law and Policy.

At the beginning of the session, the speakers presented statistics of road accidents.

According to Nirapad Sarak Chai, in 2019, 4,356 people were killed and 6,953 injured by road accidents. That means, on an average 11 were killed and 19 injured every day in the country last year.

Dr Ashraf Uddin Ahmed said, "All the doctors must have life support and basic trauma management training so that they can provide emergency care to any road

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Look beyond the perps

Political patronage of ruling groups allowed rape incidents to happen, say delegation of activists after visiting Noakhali victim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rape incidents like the one in Noakhali's Begumganj could take place due to political patronage of ruling groups and it is important to look at the source of power of these perpetrators, said a delegation of six women who visited the rape victim in Noakhali on October 9.

Led by Rahmuna Ahmed, a writer, researcher and anthropologist, the delegation issued the statement yesterday.

Other members of the delegation were Bithi Ghosh, a teacher and cultural activist; Jannatul Mawa, political activist and photographer; Mahfuza Haq, cultural and human rights activist; Shipra Bosh, development activist; and Taslima Akhter, organiser of workers and women's movement.

They visited Noakhali's Begumganj from Dhaka and exchanged views with a cross-section of society, including the Deputy Commissioner and Police Superintendent of Noakhali.

They also spoke to the rape victim.

The statement said the victim will not get justice if the ongoing movement is limited only to demanding arrest and punishment of the perpetrators. Questions must be raised and movement waged against the source of power of the perpetrators, who are patronised by the ruling force.

"It was not possible to ensure a safe life and safe movement for women keeping the source of power of Delwar gang hidden," the delegation said in the statement.

During their meeting with the Deputy Commissioner and SP of Noakhali and officer-in-charge of Begumganj Police Station, they called upon the authority figures to play the highest role in ensuring safety of the rape victim.

They also called upon all to wage a strong social movement against all incidents of rape and repression against women including the one in Noakhali.

While talking with the rape victim, they assured that she is not alone in the movement against rape. They also said her courage will strengthen the movement against rape and rape culture.

According to the case statement filed by the victim on October 4, the perpetrators including the main accused Badal, "Delwar Bahini" chief Delwar, Rahmat Ullah and Abdur Rahim, among others entered the house of the victim and beat up her husband on the night of the incident.

They took him to the adjacent room and tied him up.

Later, they tortured the victim and assaulted her while filming the incident on their phone.

At one point, locals gathered around the house hearing the victim's cry for help. The accused then threatened to kill her if she spoke about the incident, and left.

The victim, fearing for her life, fled her house and has been living elsewhere since then.

The perpetrators, however, contacted her

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Eight accused remanded over Ctg gang rape

Two confess, three remanded in another similar case in Savar

STAR REPORT

A Chattogram court yesterday placed eight accused including a woman on remand in connection with a case filed for gang-raping a housewife in the port city's Chandgaon area early Friday, reports our staff correspondent from Chattogram.

Inspector (Investigation) Rajesh Barua of Chandgaon Police Station said the court placed Jagangir, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver, also a key accused of the gang rape case, on a five-day remand while the rest seven on a three-day each.

The other accused are Md Yousuf (32), Md Ripon (27), Md Sujon (24), Debu Barua alias Jobayer Hossain (31), Md Shahed (24), Rintu Datta (30), and Monowara Begum alias Lebur Ma (55).

The court of the metropolitan magistrate, Khairul Amin, passed the remand order after police produced the accused before it with a seven-day remand prayer, said court sources.

Jahangir is known as an informant of Chandgaon Police Station, said locals. However, the law enforcers are yet to confirm it.

The incident took place around 1:30am on Friday and was led by Jahangir while the victim was returning home from Chandgaon's Rangunia upazila.

The victim is now undergoing

SEE PAGE 4



Durga Puja, the biggest religious celebration of the country's Hindu community, will not be the same this year, with Covid-19 playing spoilsport in the festivities. The home minister also said last week that no procession will be held for the ceremonial immersion of the idol. However, artisans across the country are still putting in the hours at their workshops, like this young man in Chattogram city's CRB area. The photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

PROTEST AGAINST RAPE

DU student falls sick on third day of hunger strike

UNB, Dhaka

The Dhaka University student who started fast-unto-death on Thursday demanding arrest of former Ducus vice-president Nurul Haque Nur and five others in a rape case fell sick yesterday.

She refused to get admitted to a hospital, and vowed to continue the strike until Nur and Hasan Al Mamun, suspended convener of Bangladesh Sadharan Chhatra Odhikar Sangrakhan Parishad, are arrested.

On September 20, she filed a case against Nur, Hasan, Nazmul Hasan Sohag and Saiful Islam, joint conveners of the platform; Nazmul Huda, vice-president of the platform and DU student Abdullah Hil Baki with Lalbagh Police Station.

Another case was filed with Kotwali Police Station against the six on September 21 under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act by the same student.

She started the hunger strike at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture accompanied by some classmates and activists of Chhatra League.

DU Proctor AKM Golam Rabbani said they are looking into the issue. Meanwhile, Bangladesh Chhatra League and Bangladesh Students Union expressed solidarity with the student.

Leaders and activists of the two organisations brought out separate protest rallies on Friday.

A village that thrives on eco-friendly product

RABIUL HASAN, back from Mahadevpur, Naogaon

Over time, Bhalain village in Naogaon's Mahadevpur upazila has adopted the name of 'pakha graam', where eco-friendly handheld fans are made from leaves of palmyra palm trees.

Out of the two hundred families that live in the village, 35 kilometres away from Naogaon town, most are now involved in making the handheld fans, also known as 'taal pakha'.

Almost everyone in Bhalain -- young and old, schoolchildren and housewives -- use their spare time in the making of the fans, contributing to attaining economic stability of their households and ultimately that of their rural economy.

While speaking with the villagers recently, many said it is possible for one person to make about Tk 70 from making 100 hand fans every day.

'Taal pakha' maker Anwar Hossain has been in the trade for 20 years. He and his wife with three female workers can make around six to seven thousand fans in one month, he said.

After finishing household chores at their own houses, the workers come to his house in the morning and start making fans.

A palmyra leaf is first cut to give it a rounded shape with its main stem sticking out, so it can be used as the handle of the fan. Fine stalks, carved out of bamboo strips and dipped in paint, are then sewn on both sides of the leaf's outer edge. Finally, colourful motifs are hand-painted on the fan.



Anwar's wife Shiuli Begum said she helps out her husband every day while she also takes care of their two children and everyday household work.

Saidul Islam, a 'taal pakha' trader, said about 25 years ago, when his family did not own any land, he started to help his father in his hand fan trading business. They used to buy hand fans from Bhalain village and sell those at different markets in Naogaon.

The family turned the corner after they started to make the fans themselves. Now Saidul employs five female workers to make hand fans at a small factory set up in

his house.

He now makes a decent living from the factory that produces over eight thousand pieces of hand fans per month. With the income, he made an earthen two-storey house on six decimals of land and bought a motorbike too, said Saidul, whose father still makes hand fans at 65 years of age.

Each piece of palmyra leaf, the main component, is bought for Tk 5 from different parts of Naogaon. After spending about Tk 3 more on bamboo stalks, paint, threads and labour, each fan usually sells for Tk 10 to 12, he said.

Cutting and preparation of the components are usually done by male workers, while the sewing, painting and finishing touches are done by female workers. Sometimes students in their free time also take part in the work alongside their parents.

Although 'taal pakha', made in Bhalain village, is now available in all major cities including Dhaka, Chattogram Sylhet and Rajshahi for their high demands, its makers are sometimes incurring losses due to fund shortage, Saidul said.

In order to recover the money invested throughout the year, they are often compelled to sell the excess production at low prices during cooler months, when demand for hand fans diminishes.

Bhalain village fan makers would find it greatly beneficial if commercial banks would come forward to offer them small loans at affordable interest rates, Saidul added.



A worker makes a handheld fan, top left, from leaf of palmyra palm trees in Bhalain village of Naogaon's Mahadevpur upazila.

PHOTO: STAR



A farmer works at his vegetable garden in Kagoil union of Bogura's Gabtoli upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

HOMESTEAD GARDENING

An endeavour to help Bogura farmers

MOSTAFA SHABUI, Bogura

The Covid-19 crisis has made lives of many people, especially marginal farmers, miserable. To overcome this situation, the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Bogura has recently taken an initiative to distribute free vegetable seeds and money among the marginal farmers under the gardening project.

As many as 3488 farmers in the district have got the benefit from the project till now, said Md Shahaduzzaman, additional deputy director of DAE in Bogura.

He added that they have lunched a year-round gardening project around homesteads in the district in June this year.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found that a number of farmers in Kagoil union of Gabtoli upazila were enjoying the benefit from the project.

Palash Candra, a farmer of Daskandi village in the upazila, said he has been harvesting organic vegetables from the garden for the last two months.

Earlier, he got 12 types of vegetable seeds and a cheque of Tk 1935 to make garden from the DAE authority, said the 60-year-old grower.

Mahbubur Rahman of Hizli village said "Our income has decreased amid the pandemic. The price of every vegetable item has increased significantly due to the prolonged flood but we are enjoying

benefit from the gardening project."

Monwara Begum of Koichar village said the greater benefit is that they are getting chemical-free vegetables from this garden.

Tabibur Rahman, another grower of Kagal village, said "We are getting sufficient vegetables from this one-decimal garden in the crisis time. After seeing my garden, many villagers started homestead gardening."

Farmer Shahidul Islam of Koichor village said "Before starting this homestead gardening, I spent Tk 400 to Tk 600 for buying vegetables for my extended family every week, but now I can save this money."

However, every farmer of the union is not getting the opportunity. Only selected farmers are getting this benefit.

Upazila sub-assistant agriculture officer Zannatul Mohol said a farmer, who has one decimal of land at their home yard to make garden, is getting the benefit.

Only 32 farmers in a union have got this benefit from the gardening project, said the officer.

Bogura DAE Deputy Director Md Dulal Hossain said they started the year-round project to support the farmers amid the pandemic.

He further added that in the first phase, 32 farmers in a union parishad got the opportunity to make the garden.

Criminals stab driver, loot auto-rickshaw

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Criminals stabbed a battery-run auto-rickshaw driver and snatched his vehicle in Sarail upazila on Friday.

Critically injured Abdul Hai, 13, son of Helal Mia of Swalpo-Noagaon village under Sadar union, was first taken to Sarail Upazila Health Complex, from where he was shifted to a hospital in the capital for better treatment.

Quoting the victim's family members, police said two unidentified men boarded on Hai's auto-rickshaw in guise of passengers on Friday night.

When they reached near Islamabad area the duo stabbed Hai on his throat from the back and took away his vehicle.

Later, another auto-rickshaw driver Milon, who was crossing the area, found Hai lying in a pool blood, rescued the boy and took him to the upazila health complex.

Bakki Mia, general secretary of Sarail upazila Auto-Rickshaw Workers and Owners' Association, said another such incident occurred at the same place about one and a half months ago.

OC of Sarail Police Station Nazmul Ahmed said they were investigating the matter.

One killed, 10 injured in villagers clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A man was killed in a clash between two rival groups of villagers over establishing supremacy in their locality in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased, Farid Hossain, 45, was son of late Moin Farazi of Bhabanipur village.

Meanwhile, at least 10 people from both sides were injured during the clash that took place around 10:00am.

Officer in Charge (OC) of Sadar Model Police Station Kamruzzaman Talukder said there had been a feud between two rival groups, one led by local Awami League (AL) leaders Liaquat Ali, Badshah Mia and Reza Mandol and the other by Rashidul and Labu for long.

As a sequel to the conflict, both the groups locked in a fierce clash that left Farid killed and 10 others injured, police said.



People of Batajore and Sharikal union, under the banner of 'Bhuktabhugi Purbanchalio Janagan', form a human chain in Barishal's Babuganj upazila, demanding immediate steps to repair the 20 kilometre-long Batajore-Sharikal road that connects Birshrestho Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir Library.

PHOTO: STAR

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(একই স্মারক ও তারিখ স্থলাভিষিক্ত)

ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

(পূর্ণকালীন এম.ফিল ও পিএইচ.ডি প্রোগ্রাম)

অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে পূর্ণকালীন এম.ফিল ও পিএইচ.ডি প্রোগ্রামে ২০২০-২০২১ শিক্ষাবর্ষের জুলাই-২০২০খ্রিঃ সেমিস্টারে পরিবেশ বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি, জেনেটিক ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং এন্ড টেকনোলজি, ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল এন্ড প্রডাকশন ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, ফার্মেসী, রসায়ন, ইংরেজি এবং মার্কেটিং বিভাগে ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ভর্তির জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তে নির্ধারিত ফরমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১. এম.ফিল প্রোগ্রামে আবেদন করার সাধারণ যোগ্যতা ও শর্তাবলী:

- Candidates must have Master's Degree/an equivalent Degree obtained from this University/a recognized University in the relevant/related subjects.
- Candidates having at least second class Honours Degree with 50% marks in total or CGPA 3.00 (out of 4) and second class Masters Degree with 50% marks or CGPA 3.00 (out of 4) shall be eligible for admission. In case of Degree pass Examination, candidates must have one first class or CGPA 3.5 (out of 4) either at Degree Pass Course or Master's level.
- Candidates having M.B.B.S degrees with 50% marks in total or CGPA 3.00 (out of 4) shall be eligible for admission to the M. Phil Program.

২. পিএইচ.ডি প্রোগ্রামে আবেদন করার সাধারণ যোগ্যতা ও শর্তাবলী:

- Candidates must have Master's Degree/an equivalent Degree obtained from this University/a recognized University in the relevant/related subjects. Candidates should have a strong academic record with not less than 55% marks or CGPA 3.25 (out of 4) both in Honours and Master's degree and have minimum 2 (two) years teaching/research experience in any recognized institution.
- Candidates, who have four years Honours with MS/M.Sc degree can be enrolled directly to the PhD Program.
- Candidates having M. Phil Degree obtained from any recognized University shall be eligible for admission to the PhD program.
- Candidates having 3rd division at any level shall not be eligible for admission to the PhD program, except in cases of candidates having first class both in Honours and Master's level or CGPA 3.50 with an outstanding contribution in the field of their research interest and have minimum 2 (two) years teaching/research experience in any recognized institution and have minimum 2 (two) research publications in recognized journals. This clause may be relaxed for candidates having outstanding research carrier with the approval of the Academic council.
- The teachers of this University or of any other University who do not satisfy the condition given in clause 2 (a) of the ordinance shall be eligible to apply for admission to the PhD program. It is noted that they have minimum 2 (two) years teaching experience in any recognized university and have minimum 2 (two) research publications in the field of their research interest in standard academic journals.

৩. আবেদন ফরম সংগ্রহ ও জমা দেওয়ার নিয়মাবলী:

১ ও ২ এ বর্ণিত যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীগণকে স্ব-স্ব বিভাগ থেকে এম.ফিল আবেদন ফরম বাবদ ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা এবং পিএইচ.ডি আবেদন ফরম বাবদ ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা রশিদের মাধ্যমে জমা দিয়ে ফরম সংগ্রহ করতে হবে। প্রাথমিক আবেদন ফরম সঠিকভাবে পূরণ করে আগামী ১৯/১০/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে (ছটির দিন ব্যতীত) স্ব-স্ব বিভাগে জমা দিতে হবে। আবেদনপত্রের সঙ্গে অবশ্যই সকল পর্যায়ের পরীক্ষার সত্যায়িত মার্কশীট, সনদপত্রের অনুলিপি, তিন কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের সদ্য তোলা রঙিন ছবি ও ১ সেট গবেষণা প্রস্তাব/সিনপসিস জমা দিতে হবে। চাকুরীরত প্রার্থীগণকে নিজ নিজ নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে লিখিত অনুমতিপত্র আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। গবেষণা প্রস্তাব ব্যতীত/ক্রটিপূর্ণ/অসম্পূর্ণ বা বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্র (নির্ধারিত সময়ের পর) গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

৪. ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত যে কোন তথ্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট (<https://just.edu.bd>) অথবা স্ব-স্ব বিভাগ হতে জানা যাবে।

/স্বাক্ষরিত

প্রকৌশলী মোঃ আহসান হাবীব

রেজিস্ট্রার

যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

GD-1613

Scope for massive scale-up of investment in mental health

STAR HEALTH DESK

World Mental Health Day is observed on 10 October every year, with the overall objective of raising awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilising efforts in support of mental health.

Mental health is one of the most neglected areas of public health. Close to 1 billion people are living with a mental disorder, 3 million people die every year from the harmful use of alcohol and one person dies every 40 seconds by suicide. And now, billions of people around the world have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is having a further impact on people's mental health.

Yet, relatively few people around the world have access to quality mental health services. In low- and middle-income countries, more than 75% of people with mental, neurological and substance use disorders receive no treatment for their condition at all. Furthermore, stigma, discrimination, punitive legislation and human rights abuses are still widespread.

The limited access to quality, affordable mental health care in the world before the pandemic, and particularly in humanitarian emergencies and conflict settings, has been further diminished due to COVID-19 as the pandemic has disrupted health services around the world.

Primary causes have been infection and the risk of infection in long-stay facilities such as care homes and psychiatric



institutions; barriers to meeting people face-to-face; mental health staff being infected with the virus; and the closing of mental health facilities to convert them into care facilities for people with COVID-19.

Move for mental health: let's invest
On this year's World Mental Health Day, the World Health Organisation (WHO), together with partner organisations, United for Global Mental Health and the World Federation for Mental Health, is calling for a massive scale-up in

investment in mental health.

During the past few months, WHO has issued guidance and advice on mental health for health workers and other frontline workers, managers of health facilities, and people of all ages whose lives have changed considerably as a result of the pandemic. With the disruption in health services, countries are finding innovative ways to provide mental health care, and initiatives to strengthen psychosocial support have sprung up. Yet, because of the scale of the problem, the vast majority of mental health needs

remain unaddressed. The response is hampered by chronic under-investment in mental health promotion, prevention and care for many years before the pandemic.

Countries spend just 2% of their health budgets on mental health

Countries spend on average only 2% of their health budgets on mental health. Despite some increases in recent years, international development assistance for mental health has never exceeded 1% of all development assistance for health. This is despite the fact that for every US\$ 1 invested in scaled-up treatment for common mental disorders such as depression and anxiety, there is a return of US\$ 5 in improved health and productivity.

World Mental Health Day: an opportunity to commit

The World Mental Health Day campaign offers opportunities, primarily online given the continuing pandemic, for all of us to do something life-affirming: as individuals, to take concrete actions in support of our own mental health, and to support friends and family who are struggling; as employers, to take steps towards putting in place employee wellness programmes; as governments, to commit to establishing or scaling-up mental health services; and as journalists, to explain what more can and must be done to make mental health care a reality for everyone.

Source: World Health Organisation (WHO)

DID YOU KNOW?



Heat has a stronger effect on health in less developed cities

Compared to high income cities, less developed cities in Brazil have a higher hospitalisation rate associated with increased heat exposure, according to a new study published recently in PLOS Medicine by Yuming Guo of the Monash University, Australia, and colleagues.

Heat exposure, which will increase with global warming, is associated with increases in mortality and morbidity but little is known about the socioeconomic disparities in vulnerability to heat. In the new study, researchers collected daily hospitalisation and climate data in the hot season during 2000 through 2015 from 1,814 Brazilian cities covering 78.4% of the Brazilian population. 49 million hospitalisations were studied.

For cities of lower middle income, as classified by the World Bank, every 5°C increase in daily mean temperature during the hot season was associated with 5.1% increase in all-cause hospitalisation; and for cities of middle income, every 5°C temperature increase was associated with a 3.7% increase in hospitalisation. While for cities of high income, the temperature increase was only associated with a 2.6% increase in hospitalisation.

"Increasing heat exposure along with global warming could be a potential driver for exacerbating inter-city health inequalities," the authors say.

HEALTH bulletin



Early physical therapy for acute back pain and sciatica improves disability

Patients with acute low back pain and sciatica who are referred early to physical therapy see improved outcomes at 6 months, according to a randomised trial in the Annals of Internal Medicine.

Some 200 adults who presented to primary care with low back pain and sciatica that had lasted no more than 90 days received education about low back pain either alone (usual care) or with a referral to start physical therapy within 3 days. Physical therapy included six to eight sessions over 4 weeks, plus home exercises.

The primary outcome — the change in patient-reported disability at 6 months — significantly favored physical therapy over usual care (mean reduction: 22.4 points vs. 17.0 points on a 100-point scale). The difference between groups persisted at 1 year. Several secondary outcomes, including self-rated back pain, also favored physical therapy.

Editorialists call the observed effects of physical therapy "average, modest, but nevertheless, beneficial."

The adverse effect of overuse of hand sanitizer

PROF M KARIM KHAN

We all know that the COVID-19 pandemic situation is the new normal that is going to be here for quite some time. To keep the disease away, we are asked to wear a mask, wash our hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a sanitiser and maintain social distance. We all are trying to keep ourselves safe by following the mentioned health rules and are being benefited as well.

The use of hand sanitisers has increased a lot after the COVID-19 outbreak and to some extent, we are using it too much. Some of us have become obsessed with it. There are various types of hand sanitisers available in Bangladesh. Some are in gel, some as liquid and some of them are in spray form. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has prescribed the ingredients of hand sanitisers. It should be Ethyl alcohol or isopropyl alcohol based but it should never contain methyl alcohol, or commonly known as methanol.

There are many side effects of using the hand sanitizer, such as ocular irritation, vomiting, conjunctivitis, oral irritation, cough, metabolic acidosis, respiratory depression and rarely hypoglycaemia. Excessive use of hand sanitisers may weaken our immunity by reducing our exposure to the commensal organism. Sanitiser cannot be used for disinfecting vegetables and fruits. Sanitiser should not be put inside

vehicles as they are flammable products, they can explode due to the hot temperature inside the vehicle cabin. Hand sanitiser also increase the risk of eczema and various skin infections.

Children after using hand sanitiser can eat with their hands, even if they lick their hands it will not cause any notable harm. Using methanol in disinfectant and hand sanitiser is not acceptable and it is very injurious to health, it can even be fatal.

To prevent the spread of the coronavirus, the Centres for Disease

Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and if soap and water are not available, alcohol-based sanitiser may be used as an alternative.

So it is important for everyone to be rational in using hand sanitiser. Use them only when necessary and sparingly to avoid the risks.

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Evercare Hospital Dhaka started post COVID-19 recovery clinic

Evercare Hospital Dhaka has recently started a post COVID-19 respiratory recovery clinic to help post COVID-19 patients continue their journey to recovery, says a press release.

Evercare Hospital Dhaka's post COVID-19 recovery clinic services include pulmonary care and rehabilitation, pulmonary physiologic testing, pulmonary imaging, rehabilitation, psychiatric and social services as well as research studies related to COVID-19.

The clinic also supports home recovery including multi-disciplinary involvement for medical complications for heart issues such as arrhythmia and myocardial dysfunction, as well as support for issues related to prolonged ICU stay such as loss of muscle, myopathy, neuropathy, anxiety and depression.

  /StarHealthBD



Rumors and Misconceptions Unveiled

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

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

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

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

Can cold weather kill the new corona virus?

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

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

Public awareness by:



In Search of Excellence

#Coronavirus #COVID19



Definition of rape must be changed

The narrow definition of rape and archaic provisions lead to low conviction rate

WHILE rape in reality constitutes many forms of violent actions, the definition of rape in our laws, unfortunately, is limited to only a certain form. As unbelievable as it might seem in this time and age, rape is still defined only as penile-vaginal penetration in our laws. Section 375 of the Penal Code 1860 defines rape as sexual intercourse with a woman against her will, without her consent, and adds that penetration is sufficient to constitute the sexual intercourse necessary to the offence of rape. And that's all. While the punishment of rape was modified in the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act in 2000, it did not touch upon the substantive definition of rape.

The archaic definition we presently have prevents many of the rape survivors from seeking justice for the crimes committed against them. Not only the definition but other archaic provisions in laws relating to rape also result in a low conviction rate—a 2019 study found that only three percent of the rape cases end in conviction. Procedures such as medical tests to find semen, character evidence against rape complainants in court, etc. further add to the trauma and scrutiny of the survivors. The narrow definition of "sexual intercourse with a woman" also makes it difficult to prosecute child rape, male rape or the rape of transgender individuals. Furthermore, the law also fails to criminalise marital rape.

Therefore, reforming the rape laws by providing death sentence to the rapists—as announced by the law minister in the wake of nationwide protests against rape—would hardly help in increasing the conviction rate, if other far more crucial changes are not made to the law. In modern rape laws around the world, penetration with objects or other body parts and penile penetration are equally punishable offences and deserve an equal degree of punishment. We also need to ensure that our rape laws are compatible with global standards. The brutality of being raped with a stick, or hands, or the violence exhibited in the video of the gang-rape of a woman in Noakhali, is in no way less in proportion than a penile-vaginal rape.

It is time we rethought and reformed the definition of rape in our laws to ensure justice for the rape survivors.

Mental healthcare is grossly neglected

More investment in increasing capacity of hospitals is needed

A recent report in this daily reveals the activities of a nexus of brokers harassing families of patients with mental illness seeking treatment at Pabna Mental Hospital. Getting an appointment with a doctor has become a difficult task with the already understaffed hospital operating with fewer resources due to the Covid-19 outbreak. This has given a field day for brokers to demand money from the families of patients to "manage" an appointment with a doctor inside the hospital or lure them to privately-run clinics, the credentials of which are unknown. The result is increasing suffering for the patients and their families.

This is not surprising. Unfortunately, mental health facilities are grossly inadequate in our country despite the growing number of people with mental health issues. And this has been the case long before the pandemic. The Pabna Mental Hospital is the main public hospital in the country where the majority of patients from all over the country seek treatment. It has only 500 beds and has always been understaffed. Out of the 25 allotted posts for doctors, 13 remain vacant. The hospital management has repeatedly sent letters to the higher authorities requesting that the posts be filled, but so far nothing has happened.

The Daily Star report, published on the World Mental Health Day, gives a grim picture of how far behind we are in providing proper care to the mental health patients. The theme of this year's Day is increased investment in mental health programmes—which is obviously the need of the hour for Bangladesh.

While the immediate step to take would be to identify the brokers and take action against them, the long-term problem of understaffing and lack of facilities has to be addressed on an urgent basis. Apart from filling the vacant posts, the capacity of the hospital needs to be increased by hiring more qualified doctors and nurses and improving the existing facilities. The mental health wards of other public hospitals need to be evaluated with the gaps in staffing and facilities identified and filled. There needs to be more investment in improving the quality of mental healthcare in all these hospitals.

According to the National Mental Health Survey in Bangladesh from 2018-19, around 17 percent of Bangladeshi adults are undergoing mental health problems like depression, anxiety, stress and obsessive-compulsive disorders. Isolation and loss of income during this pandemic has resulted in more people experiencing various mental health issues. Mental healthcare must be made affordable to all people and be part of primary health care. The pandemic has exposed the neglect with which this crucial area of healthcare has been treated, and should prompt the government to make the investments needed to improve existing facilities and increase the number of medical graduates who will become therapists and psychiatrists and be recruited to mental health hospitals and wards.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

How effective is the law restraining child marriage?



TASLIMA YASMIN

THE demand of girls worldwide to live free from the harmful practice of child marriage is one of the key focuses of this year's International Day of the Girl Child. Bangladesh has

committed to eliminating child marriage by 2030 in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, despite some signs of progress in recent decades, the child marriage situation in the country remains alarming, with Bangladesh having one of the highest prevalence of child marriage in the region.

Although many factors interact to place a child at risk of marriage, an inadequate legislative framework plays a crucial role in perpetuating the practice and decelerating the progress of policy efforts. Bangladesh set up a new legal regime by enacting the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017 and its corresponding Rules in 2018, replacing the old Act of 1929. The new Act, no doubt, introduced certain effective provisions which, if properly implemented, can positively contribute to the prevention of child marriage in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, there are several areas where the law lacks clarity, and the Rules also does not address those loopholes.

Retaining the previous legal position, the 2017 Act prescribes 18 for girls and 21 for boys as the marriageable age. However, such unequal marriageable age between males and females is not only discriminatory, it also creates some significant legal anomalies in the enforcement of the law. For example, if an adult woman of 18 years marries a man of 20 years, it will still be considered as "child marriage" (as one party is below the marriageable age), and the woman will have to face penal sanctions applicable for an adult contracting party under the Act—which is unreasonable, to say the least.

Discontent among the civil society actors was quite evident when the law retained the much-debated "special provision" allowing child marriage with courts' permission. It was expected that the Rules adopted in 2018 would substantially restrict the scope of application of the special provision; it nevertheless failed to do so. The Act

and the Rules do not mention anything about the requirement for obtaining consent of the minor in an application under the special provision, neither does the Act provide any guideline or criteria to the courts in order to determine a child's "best interest". There is also no minimum age mentioned for allowing the exemption under the special provision.

Another significant problematic area in the 2017 Act is that although the law

provision of release of an accused person upon signing of an affidavit or bond stating simply that he will not be involved in child marriage in the future and will take initiatives to prevent child marriage in his locality. The Rules does not provide any details as to how the accused's participation in child marriage preventive initiatives can be monitored to ensure accountability against future violations. Thus the presence of such a provision

perpetrator. This is as per section 375 of the Penal Code of 1860 which defines and punishes rape. The definition given in the Penal Code is still applicable. Although we had enacted a separate law in 2000 for prosecuting violence against women and children related cases, the law chose to remain silent on such an archaic provision. The 2017 Act also does not address the issue of rape of a child bride. This is clearly contradictory to



To stop child marriage, it is critical to address loopholes in the relevant law and to introduce effective monitoring over its implementation at all levels.

PHOTO: AP

refers to the minor involved in a child marriage as a "victim" or "aggrieved person", it imposes penalty on minors for contracting child marriage (up to one month's detention and a fine of Tk 50 thousand). The law thus clearly creates contradictions by imposing criminal sanctions upon the victims whose interests it aimed to protect.

The 2017 Act is also silent about giving an option of annulment of the marriage if the minor so wishes. A victim of child marriage would have to follow the procedures prescribed under applicable personal laws for dissolution of the marriage, which are often discriminatory in application and can be quite difficult to access for a minor victim of child marriage.

Besides, the 2017 Act introduced a new

may undermine the purpose of the law to deter child marriages by imposing criminal sanctions.

The Act also makes provision for issuance of injunction by the court. However, neither the Act nor the Rules clarifies which court would be able to issue such injunction. Similarly, for the application of the special provision, the law is silent regarding the court that may have jurisdiction to hear such application for special permission. There are also inconsistencies in the law in terms of exercise of jurisdiction by the Mobile Courts in intervening in a child marriage.

Other than the 2017 Act, one of the most challenging gaps with regard to child marriage is the law that allows rape of a girl child who is 13 years or above, if the child is married to the

Bangladesh's international commitment to protect a girl child from sexual exploitation and could encourage the culture of forced marriage of a child rape victim with the offender.

The new legal regime for eliminating child marriage, thus, needs to be reviewed extensively. Keeping in mind that Bangladesh is committed to ending child marriage, it is critical to address the gaps in the new law and to introduce effective monitoring over its implementation at all levels. Strengthening the laws would create clear benchmarks to address child marriage and would ultimately enable the policy efforts to succeed in preventing child marriage.

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We must do more to end child marriage



LAILA KHONDKAR

FROM the char of Lalmonirhat to a slum in Khulna, I have met many adolescent girls across Bangladesh who are united in their resolve to continue education, who make extraordinary

efforts to go to schools. For example, a girl in Khulna has been collecting and selling scrap papers in order to earn money to pay for her tuition fees and related costs. She persuaded her mother to go to the local councillor to explore if any funding is available to purchase educational materials. I can share many stories like that. But most of the girls are also afraid of dropping out of schools, as their parents may arrange their marriage—a fate many of their classmates already had to accept.

I am reminded of all these girls as we observe the International Day of the Girl Child today with the theme: "My voice, our equal future". What is the future of our girls, especially against the backdrop of a time when we are facing a global pandemic?

According to "Ending Child Marriage: A Profile of Progress in Bangladesh" (a report launched by Unicef on October 7, 2020), Bangladesh has the highest prevalence of child marriage in South Asia and ranks among 10 countries in the world with the highest incidents. The prevalence of child marriage in Bangladesh has dropped from over 90 percent in 1970. Still, the rate remains very high. About 51 percent of women who are currently aged 20-24 were married while they were still children.

Child marriage is a serious violation of children's rights. It's a problem that the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 5.3 aims to eliminate by 2030. In addition, child marriage has an impact on the realisation of other SDGs related to education, health and well-being. Child marriage is one of the most significant reasons for school drop-out of girls, essentially marking the end of childhood for them. It also increases the risk of domestic violence for the girl children. Married adolescents are also not able to participate in the decision-making

process of families. Adolescent mothers are more likely to suffer from birth-related complications than adult women.

In Bangladesh, a girl's risk of child marriage is aggravated by certain factors. Girls living in rural areas and poorer households are more vulnerable. This is also linked to girls' education. The rate of child marriage begins to decline only among those with at least 10 years of schooling, and prevalence falls below 50

countries of the world. Children are at an increased risk of sexual violence and exploitation, trafficking, child labour, etc. There are heightened risks of child marriage while children and families cope with school closures, loss of income, and increased pressure in the home. Girls face an unequal burden of unpaid care and domestic work, which will increase as they stay at home. Many may not be able to return to schools due to caregiving

the past decade to meet the national target, and 17 times faster to meet the SDG target.

In addition to strict enforcement of the relevant law against child marriage, proper birth and marriage registration must be ensured. The government should also prioritise the safe re-opening of schools, as the longer girls stay out of school, the higher the risk of child marriage.

In addition, there should be more investment in girls. The government should develop and implement fully-costed, multisectoral national action plans with strict accountability mechanisms. This should involve not just the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, but also the ministries of health, education, justice, and finance.

Targeted measures should be taken to protect and support incomes of families with girl children, including social protection. Specific attention should be given to the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work during this time so that it does not hinder girls' return to schools.

For a wider impact, government and non-government actors must also ensure the engagement of communities, parents, and particularly girls and women to address the harmful gender norms and build support to end child marriage.

We are celebrating the International Day of the Girl Child at a time when the nation is seething with anger against the rise in incidents of rape and sexual violence against women and girls. In addition to bringing the perpetrators to justice, we need a movement to create a society where girls and women really feel safe and get treated as equal citizens. We must ensure an environment where girls can grow up to be empowered women—economically, socially and politically—and contribute to our society in meaningful ways. Child marriage hinders the possibility of girls in realising their full potential.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic threatens to roll back progress on ending child marriage. We cannot let that happen. All of us—government, NGOs, media, parents, communities—must do more and be more effective. The question is, are we doing enough?

Laila Khondkar is an international development worker.



File photo of children forming a human chain in Dhaka protesting against child marriage.

PHOTO: AFP

percent among those with at least 12 years of schooling. Moreover, lack of social safety for adolescent girls, natural disasters, and weak enforcement of laws are some of the reasons contributing to child marriage. Our patriarchal society places a disproportionate emphasis on girls' and women's caregiving and reproductive roles. As a result, there is a high level of social acceptance of child marriage, which is a significant barrier to ending this practice.

Covid-19 has hit men and women, and boys and girls differently. Girls, especially those belonging to marginalised groups, are being particularly affected by the secondary impacts of the outbreak. This is due to harmful social norms and discrimination based on age and gender.

There has been an increase in domestic violence during Covid-19 in different

responsibilities and the decline in family income. That is what happened in West Africa after the Ebola crisis.

Some NGOs are already reporting an increase in incidents of child marriage following the outbreak of Covid-19 in Bangladesh. According to the Building Better Future for Girls project of Plan International Bangladesh, there were 291 child marriages in Kurigram alone between January and August this year. There are reports of increasing sexual harassment in different parts of the country, as many returned to their villages. Some parents are arranging the marriage of girls due to safety concerns.

We are really serious about achieving the SDG target to end child marriage by 2030, and the national target to end child marriage by 2041? If yes, progress must be made at least 8 times faster than the rate of

A Tale of Newspaper Reading

This is a revised version of a piece previously written by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in which she recalls how she developed the habit of reading newspapers, influenced by her father, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and how newspapers became an essential part of her day-to-day life.



SHEIKH HASINA

AFTER waking up in the morning, we all used to gather, one by one, at my mother's bedroom. With a cup of tea in everyone's hand and newspapers scattered on the bed... everyone would read a news item one after another, while others would listen to it and give their opinion. Sometimes, there would be debates on what was written in the newspapers or what messages the papers wanted to give. All would give their opinion as per their thoughts. This way, both the morning tea party and our newspaper reading gained momentum.

Our days would start in this way, and it would continue for at least three hours. My father got ready to go out. We also got ready to go to school. My father was very punctual in going to his office. We learned the lesson of punctuality from him.

Noticing our newspaper reading and the different opinions we gave, one day my father asked: "Tell me, who read which news items more attentively?"

We were surprised. No one could utter a single word. Kamal, Jamal, Rehana, Khoka uncle, Jeny and I—all were there. Even little Russel was also among us. He did not read, but was busy snatching away the newspapers.

When he saw we could not say anything, my father disclosed what would be of interest to each of us. We were surprised. How attentive he was! My mother mostly read small news items on the inside pages, particularly those on social issues. She also kept track of what happened where. Kamal read sports news mostly. As did Jamal. I was more interested in the literature pages and cinema news. So, everyone had their favourite topic.

From her early age, Rehana paid special attention to newspapers. Sitting in the veranda and putting her on his lap, my father would drink tea and read the papers. When Rehana saw a newspaper, she would try to grab it, as if she could read it. And then, when we came to our Dhanmondi residence, she started reading newspapers with the rest of us. When she grew up, she developed the habit of reading newspapers quite diligently. She would read every news item whether it was related to cinema or other issues. There were many stories, poems and quizzes on the page for young readers, which never failed to catch her attention.

Rehana now lives in London but she reads the newspapers of the country regularly through internet. Not only does she read the papers, she also sends me messages whenever she reads something about people's suffering, asking me to help someone or the other, questioning why an incident took place there, etc. For example, there was a news story during the coronavirus pandemic. A beggar had saved money to build a house but then donated it for the treatment of Covid-19 patients. The news of his generosity deeply moved her. She informed me of the matter immediately. So we built a house for him. This is how we have been able to stand by people—because of Rehana's compassionate heart and her habit of regularly reading newspapers. Staying abroad, she always thinks about the welfare of the people. Being constantly informed about what is happening in her country through the pages of the newspapers, she serves the people.

Kamal and I passed our childhood days in our village home of Tungipara. At that time, it took two nights and a day to go to Tungipara from Dhaka. That meant, if we boarded a steamer in the evening of a day, we had to pass the next day on the steamer and then it reached the Patgati station late at night. And from there, it took around two

hours to reach Tungipara by boat. Newspapers did not reach that area regularly. At that time, we had yet to learn the value of newspaper reading. But one newspaper would reach our house and we observed how the grownups took a huge interest in reading it.

We came to Dhaka in 1954, during a tumultuous period in politics. We did not have the company of my father. He was elected as a member of the provincial assembly. He became a minister too. He was naturally very busy and would return home at the dead of night, when we were already asleep. In the morning, Kamal and I went to school. Sometimes when my father returned home to have lunch, we met him. This brief interlude was very precious. No matter how brief, those moments when we got our father's affection and love became the most cherished gift for us.

He sacrificed his life for the people of Bengal. He dedicated his whole life for the welfare of the deprived people of Bengal.

Then he was detained in jail. When our father was free (out of jail), we hardly got his company due to the crowds waiting to see him. And when he was detained in jail, we could meet

my father got involved with another newspaper named "Natum Din". Poet Lutfar Rahman Zulfiqar was its editor.

After the creation of Pakistan, the "Ittefaq" newspaper was published with the financial assistance of Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy. Tofazzal Hossain Manik Miah was the editor of the newspaper. My father was also involved with the newspaper and worked for it.

In 1957, after getting the charge of Awami League general secretary, my father resigned from the cabinet. He stepped down from the post of the minister to concentrate on organisational activities to strengthen the foundation of Awami League. In 1958, Ayub Khan imposed martial law. My father was arrested. On December 17, 1960, he was released.

After his release, he started a job at Alfa Insurance Company, as he was banned from politics at that time. He even had to inform the police station and intelligence agency if there was a need for him to go out of Dhaka.

But this period brought for us a great chance to spend more time with our father. Waking up at dawn, we used to go for morning walks with him. At that time, we lived at a residence at Segunbagicha. Ramna Park was under construction then. We used to walk to

mother. At that time, my father started publishing a weekly named "Banglar Bani". A machine was set up after taking a place in Segunbagicha. Banglar Bani was published from there. My brother Moni was studying at Dhaka University. He was given the charge of the newspaper.

My father was arrested again in 1962. At that time, we shifted to the Dhanmondi residence. When my father was captive in jail, newspapers were the only way to get information from outside. But those newspapers were censored before delivery.

If you read "Prison Diaries" written by my father, you will realise his interest in reading newspapers during his captivity. It revealed how important newspapers were in a prisoner's life, particularly if one is a political prisoner. However, my father did not face any hassle in getting information from outside, because my father easily got information from those who worked inside the jail or fellow prisoners.

When my mother went to meet him, she apprised him of the country's political situation. And she conveyed my father's directives to the party leaders and workers. Particularly, all the credits of the movement, which was

hand, my whole day would seem dull and dreary.

I always thought of my father and mother. They had taught me to think about the well-being of the country's people and thus created in me dutifulness towards the people. They also taught us the principle of simple living and high thinking and created awareness amongst us about humanity and dutifulness. Since I was groomed with that ideology, I have been able to accomplish the important task of serving the nation. I have been able to undertake plans and thus implement those in running the country through giving priority to human welfare. And the people of Bangladesh are getting its benefits.

Criticisms and discussions will remain in political life, but if one works with honesty and integrity and can take decisions with self-confidence, then its good results will surely reach the people.

The mass media could create awareness in society, and after forming the government, I gave all the government newspapers to the private sector.

But those who were previously against nationalisation or were very critical of it made accusations when I went for privatisation; they even waged a movement and staged hunger strikes too.

I often wonder why they had started making criticisms against my father after enjoying all the facilities as the jobs of journalists, representing the newspapers that could exist in the war-ravaged country, were nationalised, and they started getting their salaries from the government.

On the other hand, when I left all of those media with the private sector, again they resorted to all means—waged a movement, made criticisms, staged hunger strikes—as I privatised the government newspapers. Why? I know no one will be able to answer this.

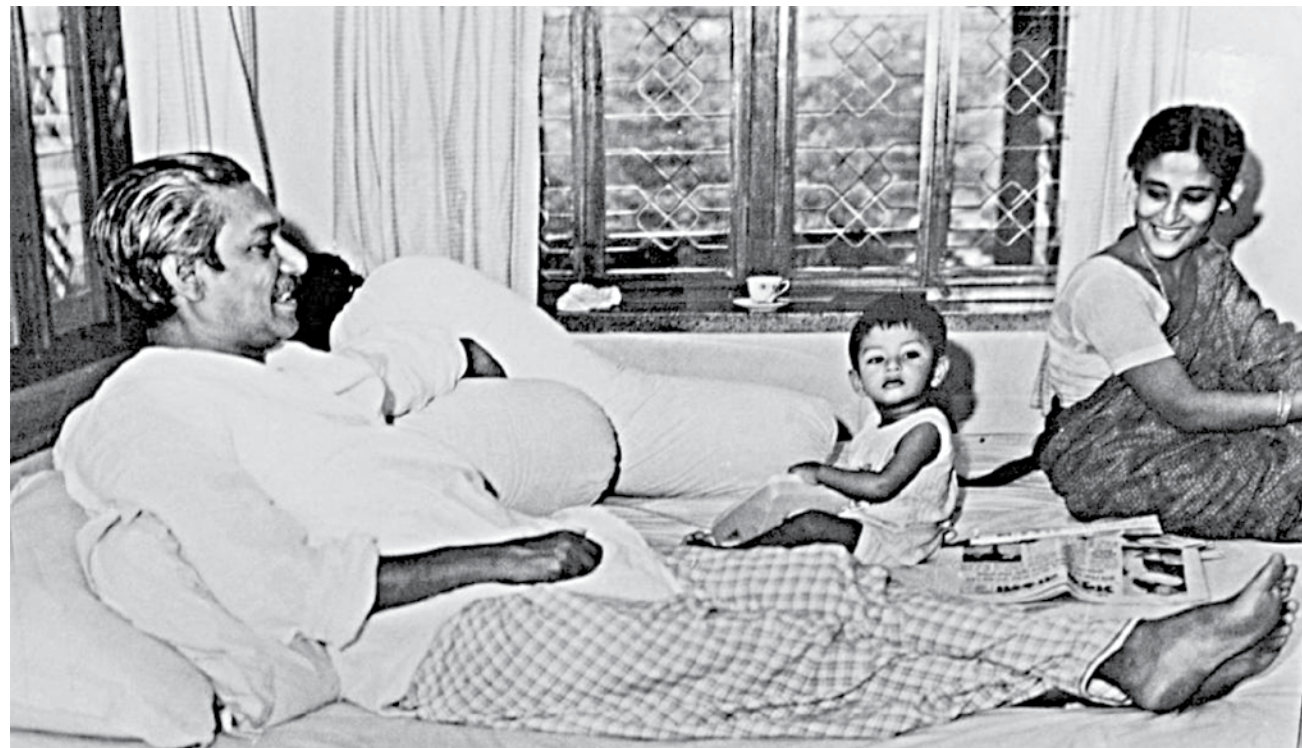
When Awami League formed the government in 1996, there were only a small number of newspapers in Bangladesh, and those were also controlled from a special place. There were the state-run radio and television. But there was no radio or television in the private sector.

Acting on my own initiative, I opened up the private sector. In this regard, I had two targets—one was to create employment and the other was to let our culture flourish—incorporating modern, technology-based culture and art with the current era so that modernism could be brought forth and the people at the grassroots level could enjoy its benefits. In our election manifesto of 2008, we had pledged to build a Digital Bangladesh, and digital devices are now making a special contribution to our daily life, especially as it helps us tackle the challenges we face because of the coronavirus pandemic. For this, we could maintain our economic activities by taking timely steps. We opened up the mobile phone industry in the private sector in 1996, and for this, mobile phones are now in everyone's hands.

Bangladesh's film industry started at the hands of my father, and there is a huge scope for entertaining the mass people by making this industry modern and technology-based. Besides, this industry could play a role in the overall development and also in poverty alleviation.

We are now going through an abnormal situation due to the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. I am hopeful that this black cloud will go away soon and a new, bright sun will rise. I wish that the lives of all become successful and beautiful. May everyone stay healthy and safe—that is my desire.

The article was previously published by Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS).



The undated photo shows Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with daughter Sheikh Hasina and grandson Sajeeb Wazed Joy.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

him for only one hour in every 15 days. That was our life!

My mother used to lessen our sorrow with her affection and love. And my grandparents and uncle Sheikh Abu Naser used to meet all our demands. He brought us everything we needed. And my father's cousin, Khoka Uncle, used to stay with us always. Khoka Uncle was always willing to extend his help—from taking us to school to going to lawyers' residences regarding the cases filed by the Pakistani government against my father.

My mother liked to read. My grandfather used to keep various types of newspapers in the house. In his "The Unfinished Memoirs", my father wrote about how my grandfather would buy and read newspapers. That's how my father acquired the habit of reading newspapers. And from him we learned to become avid newspaper readers too.

My father had an intense connection with newspapers. When he was studying in Kolkata, he was involved with the publication of a newspaper. Mr. Hashem supervised the newspaper and Tofazzal Hossain Manik Miah served as its editor. My father was involved with the publicity of the newspaper.

At that time, two other newspapers, "Millat" and "Ittehad", were also published. My father was involved with those newspapers too. In 1957,

the park from No 76—our house in Segunbagicha. There was a small zoo which had several deer, peacocks, birds and other animals.

After returning home, my father used to sit with the newspapers and have a cup of tea. My mother and father used to read the newspapers together. They used to discuss different issues.

A children's page named Kochikachar Ashar was published in the *Ittefaq* every week. I remember one Jalal Ahmed who used to write articles under the title "Japaner Chithi" (Letter from Japan). There was a section for puzzles too. Sometimes I would try to solve the puzzles. Sometimes I was successful in solving them!

At that time, newspapers had specific pages for literature. It was our regular task to read the newspaper sitting in the veranda and having a cup of tea. My mother used to read newspapers very meticulously. After lunch, my mother used to sit with newspapers and letters from the post box.

The "Begum" newspaper would be delivered at our residence regularly. There were also Reapers, National Geography, Life and Reader's Digest—some were weekly, some monthly and quarterly publications. The literary newspaper "Samakal" was also kept at the residence. My mother liked it very much. Write-ups in the "Begum" and "Samakal" were favourites of my

built up following the announcement of the Six-Point demand, were of my mother. She had a sharp memory.

I too know the companionship of newspapers during imprisonment. I used to buy four newspapers with my own money when I was in jail during the 2007-08 period. But it was not possible to take newspapers of my own choice. The then government gave names of four newspapers and I took those. But at least, I could get some news.

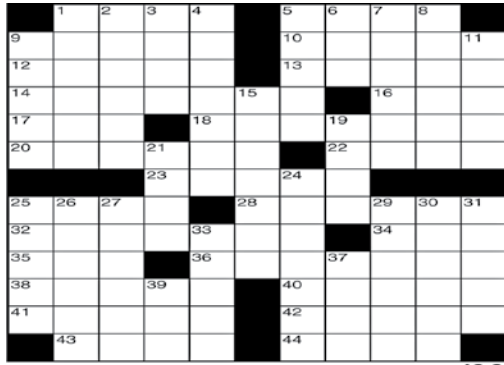
My father, Bangladesh's president and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was killed brutally by assailants on August 15, 1975. At the same time, 18 of my family members, including my mother and three brothers, were also killed.

My younger sister Sheikh Rehana and I were abroad at that time. Though we were spending our life as refugees after losing all our near and dear ones, we used to collect newspapers and went through those regularly.

In 1980, I went to London from New Delhi and stayed with Rehana for a few days. We used to take children to school and back home—for that, we got one pound for each child. Usually, the first thing I did with the money would be to buy a newspaper. On my way home from school, I would buy a newspaper, bread and other essential items. If I couldn't have at least one paper in my

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Lacking
 - 5 Satyr's kin
 - 9 Man of many words
 - 10 Parcel out
 - 12 Madrid month
 - 13 Critical asset
 - 14 Canal boat
 - 16 Even score
 - 17 Gallery fill
 - 18 Armada ship
 - 20 Girls
 - 22 Coffee dispensers
 - 23 Useful skill
 - 25 Fight memento
 - 28 New York tribe
 - 32 Speedy warship
 - 34 1002, in old Rome
 - 35 Galley item
 - 36 Fishing boat
 - 38 UV stopper
 - 40 Drain cover
 - 41 Juan of Argentina
 - 42 Diner patron
 - 43 Blowgun ammo
 - 44 Went 90
- DOWN**
- 1 Mexican state
 - 2 FBI employees
 - 3 Bookish sort
 - 4 Patsies
 - 5 Deadly
 - 6 Imitating
 - 7 Loose overcoat
 - 8 Idea
 - 9 Fit for a king
 - 11 Most new drivers
 - 15 Rodeo participant
 - 19 Sitar's cousin
 - 21 Indian gown
 - 24 Angers
 - 25 Reporter's hope
 - 26 In a frenzy
 - 27 Dawn goddess
 - 29 White Rabbit's cry
 - 30 Tried to lose
 - 31 Drying rack
 - 33 Artery opener
 - 37 Sandwich type
 - 39 Negative link



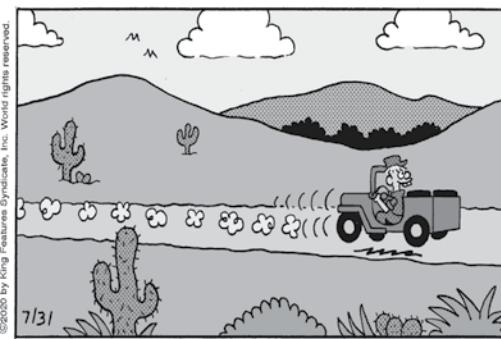
YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



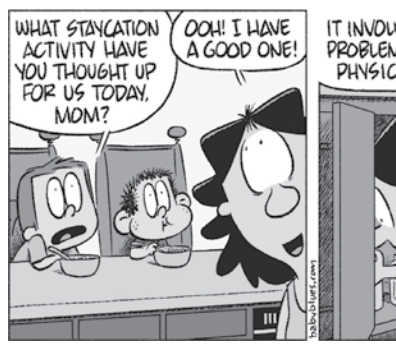
BEETLE BAILEY



BY MORT WALKER



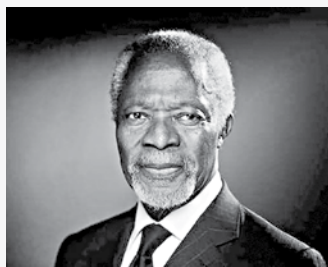
BABY BLUES



BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



QUOTABLE Quote



KOFI ANNAN (1938-2018)

Ghanaian international civil servant, who was the secretary-general of the United Nations (UN).

When women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life.

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

WHAT TO WATCH

TEN 2

UEFA Nations League
Ireland v Wales
Live from 7:00pm
England v Belgium
Live from 10:00pm
France v Portugal
Live from 12:45am (Monday)

SONY SIX

UEFA Nations League
Croatia v Sweden
Live from 10:00pm
Poland v Italy
Live from 1:15am (Monday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
Indian Premier League

Hyderabad v Rajasthan
Live from 4:00pm
Mumbai v Delhi
Live from 8:00pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
French Open
Live from 3:30pm & 7:00pm

All eyes on Mirpur as cricket returns to Bangladesh

FIXTURES

October 11: Mahmudullah XI v Najmul XI
October 13: Mahmudullah XI v Tamim XI
October 15: Najmul XI v Tamim XI
October 17: Mahmudullah XI v Najmul XI
October 19: Mahmudullah XI v Tamim XI
October 21: Najmul XI v Tamim XI
October 23: Final

**All the matches will be day-night and will start from 1.30 pm.

**All the games will be played at the Sher-e-Bangla National stadium in Mirpur.

** All matches will be shown live on BCB's official Facebook page while Bangladesh Betar will also provide live commentary.

Obviously, we feel great as we were never out of the field for such a long time. We are excited for the tournament and there are high expectations on the team. Our aim is to become champions and if we can play our natural game, we can achieve that. The positive thing is that we are a young side so our fielding department is expected to be better.

NAJMUL HOSSAIN

I think the team that will play good cricket on the field will have the chance to win. Talking about expectation, we are returning to competitive cricket after a gap of six-seven months and around fifty to sixty cricketers will take part in this tournament. We should not just think about returning to cricket but also about whether we can gain something individually from this tournament. Suppose a batsman plays really well or a bowler impresses everyone, that will help them get into the national team.

TAMIM IQBAL

It feels good to return to cricket as we had been practising for a long time now. At the end of the day, it's our job. The expectation is obviously to be champions but the fact is that all the best players of the country will be playing this tournament, which itself fosters good competition among us. As all of us will be playing after a long time, it will work as an inspiration for everyone. We all are eager to play this tournament.

MAHMUDULLAH RIYAD

SPORTS REPORTER

March 16, 2020 was the last time Bangladeshi cricketers played a competitive game. The backdrop was the first round of the Dhaka Premier League, which was cancelled shortly after following the outbreak of the coronavirus in the country.

After that long seven-month gap, cricketers will once again return to the field through the BCB President's Cup today.

Mahmudullah XI will take on Najmul XI in the opening game of the 50-over tournament at the Sher-e-Bangla National stadium in Mirpur today.

All matches will be day-night affairs and it will mark the Bangladesh Cricket Board actually resuming cricket in an attempt to gradually host international teams.

Cricketers from the national team, high performance team and members of the 2019 ICC Under-19 World Cup-winning side were divided into three teams, with Tamim XI the third team.

Although this three-team tournament may not be as financially beneficial as the DPL or first-class competitions since the sports sector has been hard-struck by the pandemic, the BCB did try to encourage players by announcing Tk 15 lac for the champions.

The runners-up will receive Tk 7.5 lac while there are rewards of



Tk 2 lac for the man of the series and a Tk 1 lac reward for the best batsman, bowler and fielder of the tournament. The player of the final will also receive Tk 1 lac.

However, for cricketers, the monetary remuneration is a secondary thought. They will be more delighted to return to the field in a competitive tournament. Even the selectors have their eyes on the tournament after the tour of Sri Lanka was postponed recently.

"Obviously, we were willing to have a squad for the Sri Lanka series and we were planning to have a look at the players during

the training camp. Unfortunately, the series got postponed in the end but we do have a group of players in mind. This tournament may not fulfil the expectations of the players financially but it has its own significance," member of the national selection panel and former Bangladesh captain Habibur Bashar told The Daily Star.

"I am sure the players will be as serious as they were during the practise matches and how they remain during any competitive tournament. We will keep a close eye on each and every single tournament from now on. But at the

same time, we are also not going to pressure the players. We want to see their attitude and observe whether they give their hundred percent or not," he added.

It will be a battle between experience and youth in the opening game. Mahmudullah's side -- featuring the likes of Liton Das, Mominul Haque, Imrul Kayes, Sabbir Rahman, Rubel Hossain and Mehedi Hasan Miraz -- will take on Najmul's relatively younger side, featuring Afif Hossain, Saif Hasan, Soumya Sarkar, Towhid Hridoy and guided by the experienced hand of Mushfiqur Rahim.



Who will make history?

AGENCIES



Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal have faced each other more than any other players in the Open Era, and they will certainly write a new chapter in their legendary rivalry today in the blockbuster final at Roland Garros with history on the line for both men.

They have met in eight Grand Slam finals, with each great winning four times, but this result will shift the tide in the all-time battle for most major trophies.

World number one Djokovic is seeking an 18th Grand Slam title and a second French Open to become the first man in half a century to win all four Grand Slams twice. Meanwhile, defending champion Nadal is bidding to win a record-extending 13th Roland Garros and 20th major, which would tie the all-time men's record held by Roger Federer. Victory would also give the 34-year-old Spaniard a 100th match win in Paris against just two defeats in 15 years. One of those losses came against 33-year-old Djokovic in the 2015 quarterfinals, the last time the pair clashed on the crushed red brick surface of Court Philippe Chatrier.

But Nadal has a 6-1 advantage at the French Open, including wins in the 2012 and 2014 finals. "This is the house of Rafa," said Djokovic, describing facing him on clay as the sport's "biggest challenge".

The Serb has won 37 matches in 2020 with his one defeat self-inflicted via his infamous default at the US Open. "The only thing I know is to play against Novak, I need to play my best," said Nadal.

UNHAPPY NADAL

Nadal had complained about the cold weather at the rescheduled French Open, which is usually held in May-June, the new balls being used for this edition, and the late finishes. But the unusual conditions have had little impact on his

performances since the Spaniard has not dropped a set in his six victories at this year's edition.

NOT DJOKOVIC'S BIGGEST MATCH
Djokovic insisted that he had played far more significant finals and pointed to his first win over Nadal at a Slam at Wimbledon in 2011. "I don't think this is the biggest match that I have ever played in my life," he said.

DREAM FINAL

"For me, it's the dream final," said Eurosport tennis expert and Spain's twice Roland-Garros finalist Alex Corretja.

Chris Evert, the winner of 18 Grand Slams titles, said, "I look at Nadal and see a warrior, fighting for everything, he's going to leave blood on the court." "I look at Djokovic and I see more of a robot but in a good sense. The mental part of his game is a level ahead of everyone else, it's awesome."

NOVAK DJOKOVIC (SER)

Age: 33
Ranking: 1
Career record: 924/188
Career titles: 81
Grand Slam titles: 17

Roland Garros 2020: Dropped three sets so far.

RAFAEL NADAL (ESP)

Age: 34
Ranking: 2
Career record: 992/201
Career titles: 85
Grand Slam titles: 19

Roland Garros 2020: Hasn't dropped a set yet.

HEAD-TO-HEAD	DJOKOVIC	NADAL
Overall	29	26
Grand slams	6	9
Roland Garros	1	6

High-octane match on cards at the Stade de France

AGENCIES

The UEFA Nations League will return to the fold tonight as France take on Portugal in a high-octane fixture at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis. Both European giants have maintained a perfect record so far in the competition and will want to win this fixture.

The first two matchdays of the second edition of the competition went ahead in September. Some of the more notable results saw both France and Portugal thrash Croatia, Italy won away at the Netherlands, Germany drew 1-1 with Spain, and England scraped past Iceland with a last-minute Raheem Sterling penalty.

France have won both their opening fixtures and are behind Portugal only on goal difference. The reigning World Champions thrashed Ukraine by a 7-1 margin earlier this week and will be filled to the brim with confidence going into this game. Portugal are currently on top of Group 3 in League A of the European competition and have one of the most lethal attacking forces on the continent. Fernando Santos oversaw a 0-0 stalemate against Spain this week and will make a few changes to his starting line-up going into this game.

France and Portugal have faced each other a total of 25 times on the international stage. The French have historically been the dominant side in this fixture, winning 18 games against their opponents. Portugal have managed six victories and will want to make a statement with a victory this weekend.

Portugal famously edged France to a victory in the final of Euro 2016 and won their first major trophy on the international stage. The French will be baying for revenge in this game and are likely to field their best eleven.

Italy will be aiming to record their second victory when they continue their campaign away to Poland on Sunday night. Roberto Mancini's side are currently top of Group 1 of League A, having picked

up four points from their opening two matches against Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Netherlands.

The Azzurri will bring a 17-game unbeaten run into this weekend's contest, while they thumped Moldova 6-0 in an international friendly on Wednesday night.

Belgium will be looking to extend their advantage at the top of their group when they travel to Wembley Stadium to face England on Sunday evening.

Roberto Martinez's side have beaten Denmark and Iceland in their two fixtures in Group 2 of League A to sit at the top of



"These boots are beautiful and I cannot wait to wear them for my next @selecaoportugal match to celebrate my career milestone!" Portugal superstar Cristiano Ronaldo wrote as he posed with his new boots ahead of clash against France.

PHOTO: TWITTER

the section, two points clear of England. The Red Devils will enter the match off the back of a 1-1 draw with the Ivory Coast in an international friendly on Thursday night, but they have won 12 of their last 13 games during an excellent run. Croatia and Switzerland were both winners in their respective friendly clashes during the week and they will each hope to build on their success having lost both of their opening UEFA Nations League matches.



Despite the ongoing pandemic, sports events are slowly returning to life in the country. The Bangabandhu Federation Cup Basketball Tournament, an eight-team five-day event, kicked off at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday. Players of Bangladesh under-19 hockey team, meanwhile, started their training camp at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium for next January's Junior Asia Cup in Dhaka.

PHOTO: STAR

Siddikur wants to go to USA

SPORTS REPORTER



Ace folder Siddikur Rahman said he wants to go to the United States to pursue a training and take part in tournaments there to try to get himself into reckoning for next year's Olympic Games.

The two-time Asian Tour winner, who has been sitting idle at home since the first week of March due to the pandemic, sees the break in play as an ideal option to train and improve his ranking ahead of next year's Olympics, which will be held from July 23 to August 8, 2021.



"I have been idle since March and I don't think there will be any more event of Asian Tour this season. So I have applied to the Bangladesh Olympic Association for a one-year scholarship worth one lakh 60 thousand dollars so that I can go and train and play in USA," the golfer told media at

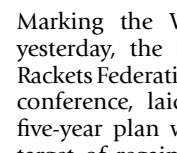
a press briefing at the Bangladesh Hockey Federation yesterday.

"Whether or not my appeal gets accepted, I will go to USA, even through my own savings. I want to train there for at least three months and play tournaments which offer ranking points," said Siddikur, who was the first Bangladeshi athlete to earn direct qualification for the Olympics in 2016.

Siddikur is currently ranked 660th in world. The cut-off date for qualification for Tokyo Olympics is middle of June next year, with 60 male golfers entitled to play.

Confusion prevails on World Squash Day

SPORTS REPORTER



Marking the World Squash Day yesterday, the Bangladesh Squash Rackets Federation (BSRF), at a press conference, laid out an elaborate five-year plan with the immediate target of regaining medals in next South Asian Games and long-term target of getting the game off to good heights, not only in the region but also in world squash.

The crowded press conference, however, was less keen on the extravagant plans and more on the authority of the speaker, Brigadier General (retd) GM Kamrul Islam, who introduced himself as the general secretary of the federation.

However, when asked whether there has been any circular from the National Sports Council on his appointment, the former general secretary of the Bangladesh Golf Federation could not provide a satisfactory answer. "We don't want to get into those arguments. Even if there are mistakes, we should see those in a positive light. We need



to look forward and not dwell on legalities, for the sake of the game," said Kamrul, who later claimed to be the acting general secretary of the federation.

An ad-hoc committee was installed in 2015 and that committee is still in place, with the general secretary of that committee, Sohail Hamid, stepping down earlier this year due to ill health. However, his resignation has not yet been ratified by the NSC.

When contacted by media, NSC secretary Masud Karim said they 'did not approve of any such committee' since the ad-hoc committee in 2015.

www.bsrm.com

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SHAH CEMENT

Treat NGOs as equal partners

Speakers urge UN, international organisations, donors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a virtual session yesterday said the local and national NGOs in Bangladesh want to be recognised and appreciated for their important role in the development of the country.

Addressing the event, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) Executive Director Shaheen Anam said, "The NGOs want to be treated as equal partners."

She said the NGOs in Bangladesh have come a long way since 1971. They are no more the aid or relief-giving organisations that they used to be.

"We have come a long way in terms of skills, experience and bargaining power," she added.

Shaheen Anam chaired the virtual session titled "UN in 75: Interfacing Government and Civil Society for Development and Sustainable Peace".

She said it would be "sad" if NGOs were not being treated as equal partners by the United Nations, international organisations, and donors.

The MJF executive director said her organisation has been working relentlessly as an intermediary funding organisation for local NGOs, bridging the gap between small NGOs and donor agencies.

The session, organised by BDCSO Process, a platform of local NGOs and civil society organisations, was part of its annual conference that ended yesterday.

Earlier on Tuesday and Thursday, the organisation held similar sessions.

Speakers yesterday said the UN needs to continue supporting NGOs in Bangladesh to flourish, especially in the technical area.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



Farmers in Bogura's Shajahanpur upazila cultivated bitter gourd on their land but recent floods in the country's northern region damaged most of their crop. Due to lack of supply, bitter gourd was being sold at Tk 2,000 per maund in the district's markets.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

CHANDPUR MUNICIPAL POLLS

1 killed, 6 hurt in violence, AL man wins

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

AL-backed mayoral candidate Zillur Rahman won the Chandpur municipality polls yesterday.

A youth was killed and six others were injured in violence over Chandpur municipality elections.

The dead, Yasin, 18, of Koralia area of the municipality, was an Awami League activist.

Meanwhile, BNP mayoral candidate Akhter Hossain Majhi boycotted the polls around 2:30pm yesterday, alleging irregularities and attacks on their activists.

Witnesses said Yasin, a supporter of an AL councillor candidate, locked in an altercation over a trifling matter with another supporter of the candidate Saeed outside the Gani Model High School polling station in Koralia area around noon.

At one stage, SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



Trump eyes come-back with White House speech

Hundreds invited; Biden calls it 'reckless'; second presidential debate cancelled

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump was gearing up for a public speech at the White House for the first time since testing positive for Covid-19, as he prepares a rapid return to the campaign trail just three weeks before the election.

The 74-year-old commander-in-chief has also announced a Florida rally tomorrow in an attempt to relaunch his stumbling reelection campaign against surging Democratic rival Joe Biden, who called the president's behavior "reckless."

Seeking to project strength and improved health, Trump had refused to participate in next week's scheduled debate after organizers shifted it to an online format out of coronavirus concerns.

On Friday the Commission on Presidential Debates made it official, saying next Thursday's debate is scrapped, leaving an October 22 event the final

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

AL organising committee suggests constitutional amendments



Awami League Organising Committee meeting with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Gono Bhaban.

October 11, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

ALOC'S MEETING WITH BANGABANDHU

The Awami League Organising Committee (ALOC) suggests some amendments to the draft constitution, mainly related to fundamental rights, in its meeting held today at the Gono Bhaban with the party chief Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The meeting lasts for about two and a half hours and the draft constitution is elaborately discussed. Initiating the discussion, Bangabandhu expresses his confidence

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ABDUCTION IN SAVAR

Three juvenile gang members arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday claimed to have rescued a kidnapped youth from Savar's Anandapur area and arrested three juvenile gang members in connection with the incident.

The arrestees -- Musha Kazi, 19, Zahid Hasan, 19, and Ashik Hossen, 18, -- are residents of the same area.

Rab-4 sources said one Hridoy, 18, from Manikgonj's Machain village, went to Savar on Friday noon to do a job.

In the evening, the arrestees picked up Hridoy and called his father from his cell phone. The kidnappers demanded a ransom of Tk 30,000 for Hridoy's return.

Around midnight, the father lodged a complaint with the Rab over the incident.

A team of Rab-4, led

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Space internet is ready for people



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

SpaceX CEO Elon Musk has said his space internet project is ready for public use following the latest launch of Starlink satellites.

SpaceX delivered a further 60 satellites into low-Earth orbit this week, bringing the total number close to 800.

The private space firm hopes to eventually launch tens of thousands of Starlink satellites to create a constellation capable of beaming high-speed broadband down to 99 per cent of the inhabited world.

"Once these satellites reach their target position, we will be able to roll out a fairly wide public beta in northern US and hopefully southern Canada,"

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

PBI officials visit gang-rape spot in Noakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Along with three accused, Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) officials yesterday visited the spot in Noakhali where a woman was gang-raped last month.

The PBI team went to the victim's home in Eklashpur union of Begumganj around 10:00am with accused Badal, Kalam, and Saju.

Inspector Mamunur Rashid Patwari, investigating

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PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 11

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:45 12:45 4:15 5:45 7:15
JAMAAT 5:20 1:15 4:30 5:50 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Tortured Rohingya boy dies in hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A 14-year-old Rohingya boy died of his wounds at Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital early yesterday, four days after he was brutally beaten up inside a refugee camp and abducted by some Rohingya criminals.

The victim, Ziabur Rahman, died around 3:00am, said Shahin Mohammad Abdur Rahman, resident medical officer of the hospital.

The boy was a resident of Kutupalang registered Rohingya camp in Ukhiya, said camp in-charge Khalilur Rahman.

Hafez Jalal Ahmed, chairman of the camp's Rohingya Community, said Rohingya criminals had abducted the boy on Tuesday when two groups of Rohingyas clashed inside the camp. The incident left four Rohingyas dead.

On Thursday, the criminals left Ziabur under a road bridge inside

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Poland's Iga Swiatek kisses the trophy as she celebrates after winning the French Open at the Roland Garros, Paris, France yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

World reels from Covid-29 2nd wave

US infections hit two-month high; record cases in Europe force more curbs

AGENCIES

New cases of Covid-19 in the United States hit a two-month high with over 58,000 infections as the number of cases surged in Europe yesterday, and breached 10 million in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Ten of the 50 states reported record one-day rises in cases, including the Midwestern states of Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri and Ohio. Wisconsin and Illinois recorded over 3,000 new cases for a second day in a row - a two-day trend not seen even during the height of the previous outbreak in the spring, according to Reuters data.

The Western states of Montana, New Mexico and Wyoming also reported their biggest one-day jumps in cases, as did Oklahoma and West Virginia.

Nineteen states have seen record increases in new cases so far in October.

In Europe, Germany and Poland enforced new restrictions to fight the coronavirus yesterday after Britain and France forced to take similar measures in face of surging cases.

Bars and restaurants are to close at 11:00 pm (2100 GMT) in Berlin until October 31 in a partial curfew, a measure already imposed -- but starting an hour earlier -- in the financial capital Frankfurt.

The shutdown in the German capital -- with more SEE PAGE 10 COL 2