



COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Panicked Europe batters down against virus second wave
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"We all have to pledge that we will take back what was snatched illegally..."
J&K EX-CM MEHBOOBA MUFTI VOWS TO RESTORE ARTICLE 370 AFTER RELEASE FROM DETENTION



"It is time to lower the heat."
REPUBLICAN SENATOR MITT ROMNEY SLAMS TRUMP'S US ELECTION RHETORIC



"As things currently stand, the hypothesis of a 'no deal' is a very real one."
FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JEAN-YVES LE DRIAN ON POST-BREXIT TRADE DEAL



Lagging behind in vaccine race

Sinovac trial uncertain after govt refusal to co-financing; experts point out slow, lackluster efforts to get vaccine

WASIM BIN HABIB and MOUJID AHMED SUJAN

Bangladesh's refusal to co-fund the trials of a Chinese Covid-19 vaccine has narrowed down its options for getting vaccines when they will be ready, experts said.

The government insists that it is in talks with makers of five front-running vaccine candidates. But its efforts are not visible compared to the frantic efforts being made by many countries, they said.

A number of countries have already made investments to get vaccines from companies that were conducting phase-III trials but the Bangladesh government is yet to make that move, they said.

And time is running out. The World Health Organisation (WHO) said a vaccine for the coronavirus disease could be ready for registration by the year end or early next year.

The first vaccine safety trial for humans began in March and five vaccine candidates have so far been approved for limited use. At least 11 more have reached the final stages of testing, according to the New York Times Coronavirus Vaccine Tracker.

On Tuesday, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said Bangladesh would not co-fund the domestic trials of a vaccine developed by China's Sinovac Biotech Ltd, Reuters reported.

Beijing-based Sinovac last month commenced phase-III trials of CoronaVac vaccine in Turkey.

With CoronaVac's phase-III testing in Bangladesh now uncertain, the government has two options left for getting vaccines, according to the experts.

It could get 20 percent of the vaccines it needs from the WHO and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) under the COVAX Facility, a mechanism designed to guarantee rapid, fair, and equitable

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A car that was seized after an accident is kept on the road in front of Tejgaon Industrial Police Station, hampering traffic movement. Such vehicles, meant to be preserved at a separate place for legal reasons, are left to wear away around police stations. *Inset*, a seized covered van kept on the footpath near the station, blocking the path for pedestrians.

PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS

THE BUSINESS

Ahead of India in per capita GDP

Bangladesh is set to surpass India in terms of per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020 because of its robust agriculture output, exports and remittance despite the economic headwinds brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. Bangladesh's per capita GDP would rise to \$1,887.97 at the end of this year, up 3.96 per cent from that in the previous year, according to the International Monetary Fund's latest World Economic Outlook report. India's per capita GDP would fall to \$1,877 in 2020, a decline by 10.3 per cent year-on-year. Bangladesh's progress was praised by the Indian media yesterday.

READ MORE ON B1

Bangladesh to resume flights to India Oct 28

Airlines of both countries to run 56 flights a week

RASHIDUL HASAN

Air communications between Bangladesh and India will resume from October 28 after being suspended for more than seven months due to Covid-19.

The decision was made at an inter-ministerial meeting at the civil aviation and tourism ministry yesterday.

The resumption of air communications will bring relief to many Bangladeshis who are waiting to travel to the neighbouring country for treatment.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Senior Secretary Md Mohibul Haque of the civil aviation and tourism ministry said three Bangladeshi carriers -- Biman Bangladeshi Airlines, US-Bangla Airlines and Novo Air -- would initially operate 28 flights a week while five Indian airlines -- Air India, IndiGo, SpiceJet, Vistara and GoAir -- would operate 28 flights a week between the two countries.

Of the three Bangladeshi carriers, Biman is scheduled to operate flights on Dhaka-Delhi and Dhaka-Kolkata routes, US-Bangla Airlines on Dhaka-Chennai and Novo Air on Dhaka-Kolkata route, sources at Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) said.

The five Indian airlines are expected to

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UNIVERSITY ADMISSION PROCESS

HSC results may not help students

UGC to propose that admission seekers' SSC grades should carry greater weight

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The University Grants Commission is set to propose that this year's HSC exam results be given no or less weight in the university admission test process as the government is awarding candidates grades without holding the public exams.

The regulatory body of higher education, expected to hold a virtual meeting today with vice chancellors of public universities, is also likely to place another proposal as an alternative -- that grades of SSC exams be given more weight.

The meeting is expected to discuss the progress of ongoing online education at public universities, in place of in-person classes during the continuing closure of educational institutions due to the pandemic. It will also discuss the first-year admission tests at public universities for the upcoming academic session.

"We will sit with VCs of public universities on Thursday [today]. We will make different proposals regarding the weightage of HSC GPAs in the university admission process for the upcoming academic session," UGC member Prof Dil Afroza Begum told The Daily Star.

When the government decided on October 7 to cancel this year's Higher Secondary School Certificate and equivalent exams due to concerns over transmission risk amid the pandemic, it led to confusion among candidates about the admission process of public universities.

Instead of the exams, candidates' evaluation would be based on their results in the Junior School Certificate, Secondary School Certificate and equivalent tests.

The evaluation of the candidates would be published by December this year. HSC and equivalent exams, originally slated for April 1, were postponed on March 22 out of fear that they would increase coronavirus transmission.

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ROHINGYA RETURN US to engage afresh with Myanmar next month

US official tells Shahriar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After the elections in Myanmar next month, the US will engage with the country



Stephen Beigun

anew over Rohingya repatriation and human rights violations in Rakhine, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam said yesterday.

"We said we want Rohingya repatriation, not long-term plan of assistance for them in Bangladesh," he told reporters after a meeting with US Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Beigun at a city hotel.

The US official arrived in Dhaka yesterday afternoon.

Beigun is to visit the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi this morning and later have meetings with the prime

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PADMA RAIL LINK PROJECT

BR for change of China firm's representative

3 'costly' projects to be reviewed

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Railway (BR) has asked the Chinese contractor of Padma Bridge Rail Link Project (PBRLP) to change the project's chief, claiming that his work pattern was causing problems in the project implementation.

Although the authorities of the PBRLP has recently wrote to the contractor -- China Railway Group Limited -- to change their "representative" Wang Kun, the issue was discussed at a meeting between Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan and Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka Li Jiming yesterday.

The meeting was held at a time when the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is reviewing the negotiated costs and plans of three Chinese-linked railway projects.

"We mainly discussed how the costs of the said projects can be reduced. The Chinese ambassador also agreed to work on it," the minister told The Daily Star after the meeting.

Asked whether the issue regarding the contractor's representative was discussed in the meeting, he replied in the affirmative.

Replying to another question, Sujan said the Chinese ambassador told him that they would look into it, but it was a lengthy process.

The minister said there was no issues over the previous representative. Officials of railways and other project-related officials were complaining about not getting

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EC to sue Faridpur-4 MP for polls code breach

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission is going to file a case against independent lawmaker



Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, popularly known as Nixon Chowdhury, for violating the electoral code of conduct.

Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda yesterday said they have enough evidence to lodge the case against Faridpur-4 lawmaker Nixon Chowdhury.

"The case will be filed anytime within today or tomorrow," he told reporters yesterday.

He made the comment while talking to reporters after the law and order coordination meeting with law enforcement agencies before by-elections to Dhaka-5 and Dhaka-18.

"The case will be filed with a local police station.

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A bus-waiting shed on Asad Avenue stands badly damaged by the elements. Authorities seem least bothered about its upkeep though passengers complain about having to get wet in the rain while waiting for transport there. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



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BANGLADESH UPDATE



1,684
New cases in 24hrs



3,82,959
Total cases



5,593
Deaths



2,97,449
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE



1,093,355
Deaths



38,549,780
Total cases

COVID VACCINES

Bangladesh to get top priority: Indian envoy

Bss, Dhaka

Newly appointed Indian High Commissioner Vikram Kumar Doraiswami yesterday said Bangladesh would get top priority in trial, distribution, delivery, and partial co-production of the potential Indian Covid-19 vaccine.

He gave the assurance during a meeting with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam at the foreign ministry in the capital, said a press release.

During the meeting, the state minister recalled the decision of the last Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) meeting over holding the virtual summit between the prime ministers of Bangladesh and India.

The Indian envoy assured that the upcoming summit was not being seen as a substitute for an in-person visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, rather it would be a complementary summit.

The state minister and the high commissioner agreed to hold the

long-pending meeting of the Joint Rivers Commission at the ministerial level soon.

Shahriar hoped that normal people-to-people connectivity between the two countries would be restored soon.

In this regard, he appreciated the Indian side for reopening people-people movement and requested the envoy to ease their visa regulations.

Doraiswami assured that the "air bubble" arrangement between Bangladesh and India would convene soon and other regulations would also be eased eventually.

Both sides stressed the need for creating an easy and sustainable mechanism for bilateral people-people movement, with ease of travel and exchange of currency.

Some other issues, including restoration of Chilahati-Haldibari rail link, connectivity with North-East India and Bangabandhu-Bapu Digital Museum, were also discussed yesterday.

Lagging behind

FROM PAGE 1

access to Covid-19 vaccines worldwide.

The second option is deals with pharmaceutical companies or governments.

Experts said the first option was complicated due to the number of countries in queue and massive global demand.

COVAX currently covers nine vaccine candidates and its aim is to secure supply and delivery of two billion shots by the end of 2021 to the over 170 countries that sign up.

There is no visible effort by the government for going into deals with companies or countries but it has been making arrangements for funds.

Officials said the government has communicated with US companies Moderna, Pfizer, UK's AstraZeneca, India's Bharat Biotech Ltd, and Russia and China.

Moderna has a vaccine candidate but the company is yet to put any product in the market.

Details of the communications with the companies and countries could not be known.

"We have enough funds. If we see the need, we will buy vaccines on top of the supply from GAVI ... we will buy [from other sources]," Prof ABM Khurshid Alam, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), told The Daily Star on Tuesday.

He said there was an allocation of \$150 million under a project and the government has allocated additional funds from revenue. Besides, it has also sought funds from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.

Prof Khurshid said, "We are waiting ... the ministry will give us a directive about to whom to make an advance payment."

A DGHS official said the issue of vaccines was being handled by government high-ups and that was why officials at the DGHS could not

say anything concrete.

"The government has allocated funds, which is good. But we do not know the exact progress made in getting the vaccine," Prof Nazrul Islam, member of the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC), told The Daily Star.

"The government is not saying anything clearly. They say they have been communicating. But have they disclosed in what quantity we will get the vaccine?" he said.

The government should not sit idle with funds, he said.

Prof Sayedur Rahman, chairman of Pharmacology at the BSMMU, said, "We have to select the vaccine which is suitable for our existing cold chain. We should not go for something that requires elaborate arrangements to preserve and carry."

Cold chain is the refrigerated delivery and preservation system of vaccines.

However, Prof Sayedur said the government should be more careful and should wait until a sustainable and affordable vaccine is developed.

The experts suggested continuing the communication with multiple potential vaccine sources and keeping all channels open.

DAILY BRIEFING
Sixteen people died from Covid-19 in the country in 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday, taking the death toll to 5,593, according to a press release issued by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The death rate stood at 1.46 percent.

A total of 1,684 new infections were recorded during the time, taking the total number of people infected to 3,82,959, it said. The labs across the country tested 14,411 samples.

Yesterday's positivity rate was 11.69 percent while the total positivity rate was 18.13 percent.

Bangladesh is currently 16th on the list of worst affected countries in terms of the number of cases.

All those involved to be brought to justice

Home boss says on Sylhet man's death in police custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

People involved in the death of Rayhan Uddin, who died in police custody at Bandarbaraz Police Outpost in Sylhet, will be brought to book, said Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal.

He made the statement at his secretariat office yesterday as journalists asked him about the death of 35-year-old Rayhan.

Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) was investigating the death. They will check the autopsy report and probe the allegations brought against police by the victim's wife, he said.

"If found guilty, all of them will be brought under trial," the minister said.

Meanwhile, a PBI team yesterday visited Bandarbaraz Police Outpost, the crime scene, and also Kashtoghar area, from where Rayhan was reportedly detained by the outpost's police personnel.

Muhammad Khaled-uz-Zaman, special police superintendent of PBI in Sylhet, said, "We've received all related evidences of the primary internal probe body and previous investigating officer of the case; we've started our investigation with visiting all spots involved with the case."

Meanwhile, M Kazi Emdadul Islam, deputy commissioner of Sylhet, also the district magistrate permitted to exhume the victim's buried body and assigned a magistrate to look after the matter.

The order was given upon an application filed by the case's previous investigating officer and sub-inspector Abdul Baten and to conduct autopsy

again, Rayhan's body will be exhumed today, PBI special superintendent in Sylhet said.

Rayhan, a resident of the city's Neharipara area, died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital at 7:50am on Sunday, around an hour after he was admitted there by police.

His wife, Tahmina Akhter Tanni filed a case with Kotwali Police Station accusing several unknown people mentioning that his husband was tortured inside Bandarbaraz Police Outpost.

As the internal probe team found involvement of the outpost's police personnel, four including the outpost in-charge, were suspended on Monday along with three others were withdrawn from the outpost.

Meanwhile, in the evidential video footages captured in a CC camera installed by the office of superintendent of Sylhet police near the outpost, it is seen that Rayhan was brought to the outpost at 3:10am on Sunday when we was not found injured and at around 6:30am, injured Rayhan was seen taken out of the outpost, and put in an auto-rickshaw.

Moreover, prime suspect of the case Akbar Hossain Bhuiyan, in-charge of the police outpost, has been untraceable since Monday night.

Muhammad Khaled-uz-Zaman, special police superintendent of PBI in Sylhet, said, "The untraceable situation of the prime suspect is in our knowledge and we are looking into the matter. No minor details of the case will be ignored anyway and will find anyone who is involved".



A section of Chandpur fishermen on their boats, while others line the riverbank, during a gathering organised by the fisheries ministry in Matlab Uttar upazila's Mohanpur area to spread awareness on hilsa conservation.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Bangladesh to resume flights to India Oct 28

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operate flights on Dhaka-Delhi, Dhaka-Kolkata, Dhaka-Chennai, and Dhaka-Mumbai routes, the sources added.

Speaking to this correspondent, CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman said around 5,000 passengers from both the countries would be able to fly each week.

Sources at CAAB and Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh said around 20 lakh Bangladeshis visit India every year by air and many of them go there for treatment.

On August 27, the immediate past Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh Riva Ganguly Das had proposed resuming air travels which remain suspended since March 15 due to Covid-19 pandemic.

During a meeting with State Minister for Civil Aviation Mahbub Ali at the secretariat, she had invited Bangladesh to join Indian air bubble -- an exclusive arrangement between

neighbouring countries to reestablish air connectivity and allow people to travel freely within the zone.

Senior Secretary Mohibul, who chaired the meeting yesterday, said air communications between the two countries would be operated under the "air bubble" arrangement.

He said under the arrangement, India would allow more than one attendants with each patient from Bangladesh to visit the country.

Earlier, India had said it would allow only one attendant.

CAAB Chairman Mafidur said passengers from Bangladesh and India would be able to fly only between the two countries under the arrangement. They won't be able to fly to a third country.

Mohibul said India has also agreed to complete visa processing of Bangladeshi passengers within seven working days.

Under the air bubble arrangement, passengers from both the countries

will have to undergo Covid-19 testing before flying.

The Indian High Commission in Dhaka on October 9 announced resumption of online visa services for Bangladeshi citizens.

For now, visas will be issued under nine categories. These include medical, business, employment, journalist, diplomatic, official, UN official and UN diplomatic.

India stopped entry of all foreigners by halting visa approvals since March 12 following the spread of novel coronavirus.

Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka Vikram Doraiswami on Monday said it would take more time to issue Indian tourist and student visas due to the pandemic.

"We have already resumed visa processes. We encourage our Bangladeshi partners to resume their applications. Almost all visa categories are covered... I am pressing very hard to reopen all visa services," he said.

EC to sue Faridpur-4 MP

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And police will investigate the matter and we will take necessary action," the CEC said.

The CEC said the EC has formed a three-member committee, led by an additional secretary, to probe whether Nixon Chowdhury has done anything wrong apart from flouting the electoral code of conduct.

The EC is filing the case as local lawmaker Nixon Chowdhury after Charbhadrans upazila election on October 10 allegedly hurled abuse at the Faridpur deputy commissioner and other local admin officials during phone conversations with them.

On Monday, a letter was sent to the EC, among other authorities concerned, from the Cabinet Division seeking action against the violation of the electoral code of conduct.

At a press conference next day, Nixon Chowdhury sought legal action against Faridpur Deputy Commissioner Atul Sarkar, claiming that the DC acted in

favour of BNP candidate KM Obaidul Bari in the recently held election for the chairman post of Charbhadrans upazila.

The MP, however, claimed the phone conversations were heavily edited.

Meanwhile, the CEC said they do not see any big challenge in holding the Dhaka-5 by-polls on Saturday and Dhaka-18 by-elections on November 12.

The two parliamentary seats fell vacant after the deaths of Habibur Rahman Mollah and Sahara Khatun.

"We had a fruitful meeting with law enforcement agencies. We hope that they will successfully perform their duties during the two by-polls."

"We have seen that these two constituencies are ready for by-elections. There are no major problems in holding the elections in the two constituencies."

He said the by-elections will be held following health guidelines.

Law enforcement agencies will ensure safety of all polling agents after

they come to polling stations to do their duties, said Nurul Huda.

The CEC said if the by-elections are not competitive, voters might lose their interest about elections. "But this is unfortunate that many elections remain non-competitive."

He said many say that voter turnout of the elections held during the pandemic was low, but it was not true.

The CEC claimed that the voter turnout of those elections was about 60 percent.

Four election commissioners, EC senior secretary, public security division senior secretary, top officials of Border Guard Bangladesh, police, and Rapid Action Battalion attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Administrative Service Association (BASA) President Helal Uddin Ahmed and General Secretary Shaikh Yusuf Harun in a statement yesterday demanded trial of Nixon Chowdhury, who had allegedly hurled abuse at government officials in Faridpur.

BR for change of China firm's representative

FROM PAGE 1

enough cooperation from the current representative, he added.

Wang Kun could not be contacted for comments.

The BR is implementing PBRLP to connect the capital with Jashore with a 169km rail line for Tk 39,246 crore, with Exim Bank of China providing Tk 21,036.70 crore as loan.

Apart from the minister, Railways Ministry Secretary Salim Reza, BR Director General Md Shamsuzzaman and officials involved in the projects took part in the virtual meeting from the Rail Bhawan in the capital.

REDUCING PROJECT COST
On September 30, the PMO formed a committee to review negotiated contract costs of three railways projects and whether those projects should go as per the existing plan. The projects were supposed to be implemented with Chinese finance and by Chinese companies.

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

Ishwardi; and construction of dual-gauge double line between Joydebpur and Mymensingh and Jamalpur are the projects in question.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) has approved the first two projects, Chinese companies have been selected and contract costs have also been negotiated. However, final loan and commercial deals have not been signed yet.

Railways sources said the committee, led by Shamima Nargis of the physical infrastructure division of the Planning Commission, has already submitted its report, with recommendations on cutting a "significant amount" of the negotiated costs, and the PMO was now working on it.

The railways minister said there was a huge discussion on "high cost" of projects like Akhaura-Sylhet dual-gauge line and Joydebpur-Ishwardi double line. "After taking charge of the ministry, I also came to know about this but could do little as those were already approved by the Ecne."

But, as the PMO has taken an

initiative to review the costs, he also discussed the matter with the Chinese ambassador, the minister said. "We talked about how the projects can be taken forward quickly."

The Ecne in April last year had approved the project to convert the metre-gauge railway line into dual-gauge from Akhaura to Sylhet for over Tk 16,104 crore. The contract cost negotiated with China Railway Construction Bridge Engineering Bureau Group Co Ltd is Tk 12,079 crore.

The government took up a Tk 14,250 crore project in January last year to turn Joydebpur-Ishwardi section into a dual-gauge double line. It is scheduled to be completed by December 2024. The negotiated contract cost for this project is Tk 9,839 crore and the selected company is China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation.

The tentative negotiated cost for constructing dual-gauge double line alongside the existing Joydebpur-Mymensingh-Jamalpur section is Tk 8,808 crore and the selected company is China Railway International Group.

US to engage afresh

FROM PAGE 1

minister and the foreign minister. He is expected to visit Kurmitola General Hospital and hand over some medical equipment to treat Covid-19 patients and hold a roundtable with journalists.

"The US deputy secretary said they have already imposed some sanctions. Now that there is a national election on November 8 in Myanmar, they will engage after the election on Rohingya repatriation," he said.

Beigun also expected that the neighbouring countries would engage more in addressing the Rohingya crisis in a sustainable way. The more than an hour long meeting over dinner touched on various issues, including trade and investment, the state minister said.

Bangladesh has invited US companies for offshore gas exploration in the Bay of Bengal.

Beigun said a US company was already supplying LNG to Bangladesh and he would look into how more energy companies can work here.

"[selection of companies] happens through open bidding. It even happens through direct negotiation. If we get that sort of a company, we can go for that as well," Shahriar said.

"They are more interested on free trade agreement," he said.

He said the US would also look into how Bangladesh's private sector could be engaged in vaccine production and that when US companies can produce Covid-19 vaccines, Bangladesh would be sold those with priority.

Covid puts global progress against TB at risk: WHO

REUTERS, London

The Covid-19 pandemic is derailing global efforts to tackle tuberculosis (TB), the world's deadliest infectious disease, with cases likely to rise without urgent action and investment, the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday.

The WHO's annual TB report found that tuberculosis killed some 1.4 million people in 2019, little changed from the 1.5 million deaths it caused in 2018. It warned that many countries are not on track to meet targets for successfully diagnosing and treating cases to try to stop the disease's spread.

FAHIM SALEH MURDER

Accused pleads 'not guilty' before US court

AGENCIES

The former executive assistant of Fahim Saleh, co-founder of Pathao, pleaded not guilty yesterday to charges of first-degree murder for allegedly decapitating and dismembering the tech entrepreneur in his luxury New York condo in July.

Tyrese Haspil, 21, entered his not guilty plea via Skype before a state court judge in Manhattan after a grand jury indicted him on upgraded charges of first- and second-degree murder, second-degree grand larceny, second-degree burglary, concealment of a human corpse and tampering with physical evidence, reports CNN quoting the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

Saleh, 33, who had most recently founded the Manhattan venture capital firm Adventure Capital, was killed in his Manhattan apartment on July 13.

Haspil handled Saleh's finances and personal matters, a law enforcement official with knowledge of the investigation said at the time. The assistant allegedly owed Saleh tens of thousands of dollars and was on a repayment plan, according to the official.

Fahim Saleh was an entrepreneur who launched successful tech start-ups in Bangladesh, Nigeria and North America.

Saleh "was a witness to a crime committed on a prior occasion and the death was caused for the purpose of preventing the intended victim's testimony in any criminal action or proceeding, whether or not such action or proceeding had been commenced," read the indictment.

The indictment charges Haspil with three grand larceny counts for allegedly stealing tens of thousands of dollars from Saleh through PayPal and Intuit transfers.

Court documents said a Makita saw, scissors, a knife, gloves and a mask were found in Saleh's apartment, along with bags containing a head and limbs.

"We're contesting everything here, including the circumstances of the death and whether or not they can prove that this young man had anything at all to do with it," said Neville Mitchell, an attorney with the Legal Aid Society's Homicide Defense Task Force, who is representing Haspil.

"This is going to be a vigorous defense for this young man. There are a lot of things that we're investigating that you know we're not prepared to offer at this time in terms of the defense, but there will be a vigorous defense."

Haspil is being held at Rikers Island, according to Mitchell.

The case was adjourned until January 11.

Saleh was found dead the day after he was killed in the living room of his condo on the Lower East Side, police said. His cousin had gone to check on him. His head and limbs were severed.

HSC results

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More than 13.65 lakh students were expected to sit for the exams.

The government postponed the exams following the closure of all educational institutions on March 17. They are to stay closed until at least October 30.

Prof Dil Afroza Begum said that in normal times, universities took the GPA of SSC and HSC exams into account, alongside admission tests. But this year is different, so they are looking for some alternatives.

She said as one of the alternatives, UGC will propose that HSC results should not carry any weight in the admission process.

"Another option will be that SSC results will carry more weight than that of HSC exams," she added. "But all these will be finalised if public universities VCs and teachers accept the proposals."

Many were uncertain about whether admission tests would be held after the government's cancellation of the HSC exams, but Dil Afroza and other UGC members said they were strongly in favour of taking the admission tests.

"We can hold exams like SAT or GRE or GMAT. We will set questions in such a way that none can raise questions about the process," she added.

Dil Afroza and another UGC member, Muhammed Alamgir, both said they are going to introduce centralised admission tests at public universities this year.

It would help them reduce the number of exams for candidates, said Alamgir.

UGC in February decided to introduce the new system titled "Central Admission Test" for the 2020-2021 academic year to reduce the hassle of admission seekers.

Five universities - Dhaka University, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), Rajshahi University, Jahangirnagar University and Chittagong University - have not shown any interest in the new system.

Top UGC officials said they hope that these universities will join the system considering the situation created by the pandemic.

When contacted DU Pro-vice Chancellor Prof Muhammad Samad and JU Professor Md Amir Hussain both said they need to discuss the matter with their academic council and other forums before finalising anything.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Death penalty is not the solution

Says Amnesty International

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty International yesterday criticised the Bangladesh government's decision to introduce death penalty as a punishment for rape, terming it a "regressive step".

In a statement published on its website, the international human rights body's South Asia researcher Sultan Mohammed Zakaria said, "This regressive step is a fig leaf that deflects attention from the lack of real action to address the appalling brutality faced by so many Bangladeshi women."

"Executions perpetuate violence, they don't prevent it. Instead of seeking vengeance, the authorities must focus on ensuring justice for the victims of sexual violence including through delivering the long-term changes that would stop this epidemic of violence and prevent it from recurring," Zakaria added.

Amnesty said perpetrators of rape must be prosecuted and the impunity for these horrific crimes must come to an end, but through fair proceedings and without resorting to death penalty.



DEFIANT... Wielding flaming torches and fiery slogans, women of all ages joined the midnight march from Shahbagh to Manik Mia Avenue in the capital.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Together they march to break the shackles

Dhaka women take to streets at midnight in protest against rape

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Holding torches and placards, hundreds of women marched in the streets of Dhaka early yesterday, protesting the government's failure to provide security for women and the recent surge in rape.

They also pressed for their 12-point demand, including amendment of the Penal Code by changing the discriminatory definition of rape to make it more inclusive.

The protesters united under the banner "Shekol Bhangar Padajatra" (March to Break the Shackles). The march started from Shahbagh at 11:59pm, participated by women from all walks of life.

The procession reached Manik Mia Avenue around 1:30 pm via Kataban, Science Lab and Rapa Plaza. A good number of men were seen taking part in the procession.

In unison, protesters shouted slogans like "I am a woman, I am innocent", "the real culprit is the rapist" and "rapists roam free while my sister is in the grave".

Faiza Fairuz Rimjhim, a student who took part in the procession, said, "We marched at night to also protest the unwritten ban on girls going out at night."

Protesters demanded security for women, and spoke against the state's failure and patriarchy.

A rally was also held in front of National Parliament, participated by noted photographer Shahidul Alam, activist Rehnuma Ahmed and Dhaka University teacher Samina Luthfa, among others.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Integrated approach needed for awareness

Says CJ on human trafficking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh needs an integrated approach to develop public awareness against trafficking of persons and smuggling of individuals, Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain said yesterday.

"We feel that strong commitment of the government and sensitised judiciary can play a vital role to prevent human trafficking," he said.

He was addressing the closing ceremony of the two-day Bangladesh E-judicial Colloquium, organised virtually.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) "Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants- Bangladesh" (GLO.ACT-Bangladesh) Project organised the colloquium.

Addressing the event as chief guest, the chief justice said human trafficking has become an acute threat in Bangladesh in recent decades.

A large number of women and children are displaced from the offense and trafficked in different parts of the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

GRAFT CASE AGAINST BABAR

Finish trial in 30 days: HC to court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the lower court concerned to finish the trial proceedings of a corruption case against former BNP state minister Lutfozzaman Babar in 30 days.

The HC also summarily rejected a petition filed by Babar seeking transfer of the court where the corruption case against him is pending.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Ahmed Sohel came up with the order after holding hearing on the petition. The HC asked the Special Judge's Court-7 of Dhaka to finish the trial proceedings against Babar in 30 days after receiving its order, Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik told The Daily Star.

He said Babar, now in jail, recently

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

SAGAR-RUNI MURDER

Rab fails 74th deadline to submit probe report

Court directs to turn it in by Nov 22

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again asked Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to submit the probe report of a case filed over murder of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi by November 22.

With yesterday's date, the investigation officer has so far taken 75 dates to complete investigation.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury passed the order after Rab Additional Superintendent Khondoker Shafiqul Alam, also investigation officer of the case, failed to submit the report yet again yesterday.

Earlier on November 11 last year, the High Court expressed disappointment at the lack of significant progress in investigation.

Sagar, news editor at private TV channel Maasranga, and his wife Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed in the early hours of February 11, 2012 in their rented flat at the capital's West Razabazar.

After Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police and the Detective Branch of police, Rab was tasked with the probe on April 18, 2012.

'1 lakh litre milk wasted per year'

Speakers say, urging efforts to grow the industry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To ensure proper nutrition for all and protect cattle farmers, speakers have called for coordinated efforts to grow a robust milk industry in the country.

Pointing out that nearly one lakh litres of milk is wasted per year, they said marketing milk using ultra-high temperature (UHT) technology can prevent wastage and help more people get proper nutrients.

Addressing a webinar, they also urged the government to provide loans at simple terms and conditions to make UHT technology popular.

On the eve of World Food Day, The Daily Star yesterday organised the webinar titled "Bridging food system gaps and ensuring access to safe milk in Bangladesh: The role of UHT technology".

Head of Public Relations at Nagad Zahidul Islam moderated the programme.

UHT milk processing technology and Tetra Pak's six-layer aseptic packaging can ensure food safety, hygiene, and preservation for up to six months without refrigeration and preservatives.

Syed Muntasir Redwan -- national coordinator of SUN Business Network, a leading private sector initiative to improve nutrition in emerging markets -- said, "In want of proper preservation knowledge and capacity, about one lakh litres of milk is wasted annually."

"As per WHO recommendations, a person needs to consume 250ml of milk each day to meet nutrition demands," Muntasir added.

"In reality, per capita milk consumption is around 50ml daily," he said.

Eleash Mridha, managing director at PRAN Group, said a huge amount of powdered milk is imported, whereas a good amount of milk is wasted every day due to lack of proper distribution channels.

Underscoring the need to adopt UHT for massive production, he said if the government patronises industrialists, huge amounts of currency will be saved.



Standing amid a chaotic crowd, a man lifts the glistening fish up to chest-height, almost as if to show off his score. The photo was taken late on Tuesday night from Port Road wholesale market.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Midnight madness for hilsa in Barishal

Buyers overflow wholesale market before 22-day selling ban hits

SUSHANTA GHOSH

Some with bags in hand, others hands bare -- Barishal city dwellers were rushing to Port Road hilsa wholesale market on Tuesday midnight.

But why? Turns out it's the anticipation of a price fall surrounding the coming 22-day ban on selling the famed fish that kept the city awake at night.

Inside the market, there was barely any space to move about. Since Tuesday night, hundreds have been rushing in, completely flouting social distancing guidelines.

The 22-day ban started at midnight yesterday. Out of market for this period, anglers and sellers were anxious to sell off their stock. Trawlers after trawlers have been coming to the port for the last few days from Mehendiganj, Muladi, and Bhola, said wholesaler Ajit Kumar Das Manu.

And the customers are lapping it up. Someone was seen buying a pair of large-sized hilsa, while another got a haali (two pairs). Some of the wealthier could be seen bagging 10 or even a dozen of the fish.

For example, one Rekha Sultana said she wanted to stock at least 10 hilsa for her family for the ban.

This mass buying, however, has had a counter-intuitive effect on the price of the fish -- with so many willing buyers,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Distributed by: Syed Xinan S. Rahman, Founder & Sadaqat Omar, Co-Founder of Sanitas International

HC directs to stop fake arrest warrants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued several directives on the authorities concerned to stop fake arrest warrants.

In response to a writ petition, the HC directed that the names, designations and official phone numbers of judges or magistrates, who will issue the warrants, must be mentioned in the order.

The names, designations, numbers of mobile phones and signatures of the court staff who will prepare the arrest warrant will have to be used also so that the accused against whom the warrant have been issued can communicate with the court staff concerned about its authenticity, the HC said. It said the police officers responsible for executing the warrants, will also communicate with the court staff preparing the warrants over their cellphones.

In the verdict, the HC ordered that police officers will produce the accused

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

CTG POLICE BOX BLAST Six more 'Neo-JMB operatives' arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTG

The Counter Terrorism Unit of Chattogram Metropolitan Police has arrested six suspected 'Neo-JMB' operatives over the bomb blast at a traffic police box which left five men including two cops injured in Sholoshahar Gate-2 area on February 28 this year.

The arrestees are Mohidul Islam (24), Jahir Uddin (28), Moinuddin (20), Abu Sadek (19), Rahmat Ullah Akib (24) and Alauddin (23), said CTU sources.

Mohidul and Jahir were arrested at Kolabazar in Bandarban on Tuesday and the rest four from Lohagara, Chattogram on early Wednesday.

With this, a total of 10 alleged 'Neo-JMB' men were arrested in this connection.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Asif Mohiuddin of the CTU told The Daily Star, "They are active operatives of Neo-JMB and they told the police that they are working to establish Sharia law in the country."

"Police got their link during the investigation and later traced them in Bandarban and Lohagara upazilas," he said.

The police official said they used to upload bomb-making videos on different apps.

A CTU official said Abu Sadek who studied in a madrasa left improvised explosive device (IED) inside a carton at the traffic police box which was blasted through a remote control device later. "Afterwards, he fled to Dhaka and returned to Lohagara a few days later," he said.

ADC Asif said police are verifying their information and tried to trace out the other militants

Sgt Arafat, Assistant Sub-Inspector Atauddin and three pedestrians were injured when the bomb went off in the port city's Sholoshahar on the night of February 28. According to SITE Intelligence Group, IS claimed the responsibility of the police box attack similar to Dhaka and Khulna. However, police ruled out the IS link.

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REAPPOINTMENT OF DHAKA WASA MD HC order on challenge Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court will deliver its order on Sunday on a writ petition that challenged the legality of the process for reappointing Taqsem A Khan to the post of managing director (MD) of Dhaka Wasa.

The HC bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Md Khairul Alam yesterday fixed the date after concluding hearing on the matter.

Khandker Monjur Morshed, former additional chief engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board, submitted the writ petition to the HC on September 24.

In it, he prayed to the HC to stay the proposal for extending the tenure of

Taqsem as Wasa MD by three more years.

Citing the petition, Khandker Monjur's lawyer Md Tanvir Ahmed told The Daily Star that the Wasa's board meeting is supposed to be convened by its chairman or vice chairman to select its MD as per The Water Supply and Sewerage Authority Act 1996. But, the meeting was convened by its board secretary on September 17.

Besides, a selection committee was supposed to be formed for the appointment of the MD and a gazette notification must be issued for constituting the selection committee as per the relevant rules, but no such committee was formed, lawyer Tanvir said.

Integrated

FROM PAGE 3

country. Besides, a significant number of people are trafficked in many other countries from Bangladesh, he said.

Mahmud Hossain said the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act-2012 provides a broad legislative framework for prevention of trafficking, prosecution of traffickers and protection of potential victims of human trafficking.

Besides, the constitution of Bangladesh serves as a potent anti-trafficking legislation.

The constitution guarantees the right of every citizen to enjoy protection of law, and imposes an obligation for the state to prevent violation of human rights in any form, that also include human trafficking, he added.

The chief justice said equipping judges and prosecutors with better understanding of law related to human trafficking and

related crimes are particularly important.

"Trafficking undermines democracy, rule of law and accountability of governments," he said, adding that it is a great violation of human rights and considered one of the most serious crimes under both local and international laws.

The CJ said the judiciary has played a vital role to deal with and dispose of trafficking cases with utmost urgency.

The anti-human trafficking tribunals set at seven divisional headquarters disposed of 950 trafficking cases in 2019, said the CJ.

In 2019, the High Court Division of the Supreme Court in a writ petition directed the government to form a high-powered committee in order to probe the incident of human trafficking and to identify the travel agencies and human traffickers responsible for the deaths of 37 Bangladeshi nationals in the Mediterranean Sea, he added.

Together

FROM PAGE 3

They demanded exemplary punishment for offenders in all pending rape and sexual violence cases as soon as possible.

Protesters' other demands include ensuring security for women on hills and plain land, taking steps against those involved in harassing victims, bringing necessary reform in education system, implementing and making the sexual harassment cell functional in educational institutions, repealing section 155(4) of Bangladesh's Evidence Act 1872 and completing trial of rape cases within 90 days through speedy tribunal.

The rally ended around 2:30am.

Amid nationwide protests in the wake of a series of gang-rapes and sexual assaults on women, the president on Tuesday promulgated an ordinance allowing death penalty as the highest punishment for rape instead of life-term imprisonment.

Experts, however, said death penalty is not a solution and the government needs to immediately address systemic problems in rape trials and the extremely low conviction rates.

HC directs

FROM PAGE 3

along with the warrant orders.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman came up with the verdict following a petition filed on December 9 last year challenging the arrest warrant issued against Gonoshasthaya Kendra programme officer Awlad Hossain.

Awlad's wife Shahnaj Parvin filed the petition seeking necessary order from the HC. She said in the petition that Ashulia police arrested her husband on October 30. Later, a fake arrest warrant was issued against Awlad and he was produced before different courts of Dhaka, Cox's Bazar, Bagerhat and Sherpur, Shahnaj claimed.

She prayed to the HC to order police to produce Awlad before the HC to show that he was not detained illegally.

Petitioner's lawyer Emadul Haque Bashir told The Daily Star that some cases were filed against Awlad under the women and children repression prevention act.

Following the petition, the HC bench issued a rule questioning the warrant against Awlad.

Awlad was released from custody following the HC order, lawyer Emdadul added.

Finish trial

FROM PAGE 3

submitted the petition claiming that the trial court judge has rebuked a witness during case proceedings.

Lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan appeared for the Anti-Corruption Commission and lawyer Parvez Hossain argued for Babar.

Babar has been convicted and sentenced to death in the sensational 10-truck arms haul case and August 21 grenade attack case.

ACC filed the case with Ramna Model Police Station on January 13, 2008 against Babar for amassing illegal wealth worth Tk 7.5 crore.

The commission submitted charge sheet to the lower court on July 16, 2008, which accepted the charges on July 23, the same year.

The case is now at the stage of recording and examining the statements of the witnesses.

Bangabandhu's

FROM PAGE 12

Recalling that in February this year he had invited Naville's attention to the plights of the stranded Bangalees, the prime minister observes that since then there has been steady deterioration in their general condition.

The prime minister tells Naville, "In the considered view of my government the International Committee of Red Cross, who have been taking an active interest in regard to the persons of non-Bangali origin living in Bangladesh and owing allegiance to Pakistan, are well-placed to play an equally significant humanitarian role in securing safety and well-being of the Bangalis stranded in Pakistan".

PEACE MEDAL AN HONOUR TO MARTYRS
The National Executive Committee of Bangladesh Chhatra League garland Bangabandhu at the Gono Bhaban today while felicitating him on his being awarded the Joliot-Curie Medal by the World Peace Council Presidential Committee.

Replying to the felicitations, Bangabandhu says the honour of the award does not belong to him. He says the martyrs who shed blood in the liberation struggle of Bangladesh are virtually accorded the honour. "It is the entire seven and a half crore people of Bangladesh who have been honoured," he observes.

PRESS CLUB LIFE MEMBERSHIP FOR BANGABANDHU

Jatiyo Press Club today in a meeting unanimously decides to confer life membership of the club to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. A deputation would soon meet Bangabandhu to seek his consent.

SOURCES: October 16, 1972 issues of *Bangladesh Observer*, *Dainik Bangla* and *Dainik Ittefaq*.

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Bangladesh being used

FROM PAGE 12

Muhammed Ahsanul Jabber, director general of the DNC, shared the findings with journalists at a press briefing at its headquarters in the capital's Segunbagicha.

He said they already talked to the authorities of a delivery service company and they told them that a scanner had been installed at its office.

"We will visit the office soon to check the activities of the scanner. Other delivery service companies must install scanners or else they will be held responsible," he said in reply to a query.

On September 9, the customs authorities conducted a drive in the export cargo village and seized the 12.32kg of amphetamine powder packed in a consignment of clothes for export.

The next day, a case was filed with the Airport Police Station in this connection.

Seven people have so far been arrested for their alleged involvement in the smuggling, including the so-called "mastermind" Abul Kalam Azad alias Bunty, a chemical businessman in the capital's Mitford area.

The six others are: Rezaul Haque Bablu, Junayed Ibne Siddiqui, Nazrul Islam, Babul Mazumdar, Md Mazed and Md Bappi.

DNC DG Ahsanul said the syndicate smuggled the amphetamine powder to Bangladesh from India through the Benapole border.

In primary interrogation, Abul Kalam Azad alias Bunty said he collected the powder with the help of Indian chemical trader Habib Master, he said.

Habib's associate Rajkhan was responsible for sending the powder to Bangladesh after crossing the border illegally and later it was sent to Dhaka through different Bangladeshi delivery service companies, said the DNC official, quoting Bunty as saying.

After the powder reached Dhaka, Bunty sold it to Junayed and Nazrul through his men Din Islam and Saiful. The DNC is now looking for Din Islam and Saiful.

The seized 12.32kg amphetamine powder, worth over Tk 24 crore, was supposed to go to Australia via Malaysia. Junayed and Nazrul took the powder to an international courier service provider to send it to Australia.

Asked about taking action against the service provider, DG Ahsanul said they are still probing the incident.

He said it was not the first time a syndicate smuggled amphetamine using Bangladesh as a route.

The DNC chief, however, did not go into details in this regard.

Responding to another query, Ahsanul said they have an agreement with the Narcotics Control Bureau of India for sharing information and intelligence and they already told their Indian counterpart to take action against the smuggling.

Peru opens Machu Picchu

FROM PAGE 12

majestic mountaintop dotted with ancient ruins that once attracted thousands of tourists a day but has been closed since March because of the coronavirus.

The Japanese boxing instructor, identified by local media as a 26-year-old from Nara, has been stuck in Peru since March, when he bought a ticket for the tourist site just days before the country declared a health emergency.

He told a Peruvian newspaper he had only planned to spend three days in the area, but with flights cancelled and movement limited by the virus, he found himself stuck there for months.

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Former Ducsu VP Nur

FROM PAGE 12

Sams Joglul Hossain took the case into cognisance and recorded the statement of the complainant.

The court instructed the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) to investigate the case and submit a report to it by November 29.

In his Facebook Live video, Nur said, "I have investigated the allegation [of rape] and found that Abdullah Hil Baki, Nazmul Huda and Saiful Islam of Chhatra Adhikar Parishad are not involved in the incident. Nazmul and Sohag may be involved."

"The female student's brother said Nazmul Hasan Sohag used to visit their home. They talked about their marriage. A picture of the student and Nazmul smiling happily in the launch cabin went viral on Facebook. The allegation of rape inside the launch cabin is absolutely ridiculous," added Nur, also the joint convener of Bangladesh Chhatra Adhikar Parishad.

Nur used the word "dushcharitraheen", but there is no such word in Bangla.

Contacted, the former Ducsu VC claimed that he did not call the DU student "characterless", rather he meant to say that she was "not characterless" by using the word "dushcharitraheen". He said the word is used colloquially.

Nur alleged that the student filed the cases after being politically influenced and also to harm the image of him and his organisation.

THREE PREVIOUS CASES

The DU student had previously filed three more cases against Nur and five others under the Women and Children Repression and Prevention Act and the Digital Security Act (DSA).

On September 20, she lodged a rape case against Nur and five others with Lalbagh Police Station under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act. The other accused in the case are Hasan, Nazmul Hasan Sohag and Saiful Islam, joint conveners of Bangladesh Chhatra Adhikar Parishad, Nazmul Huda, vice-president of the platform, and DU student Abdullah Hil Baki.

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

On September 23, she filed a third case with Shahbagh Police Station under the Pornography Control Act and DSA.

Meanwhile, the DU student continued her hunger strike until death at the foot of Raju Memorial Sculpture on the university campus for the sixth straight day yesterday demanding arrest of the six accused, including Nur.

After falling ill on Saturday, she received treatment at two city hospitals. She resumed the strike the following day after being discharged from a hospital.

Trump, Biden set to face

FROM PAGE 12

Debate organizers said they wanted to switch the format to a virtual appearance, for safety reasons, and Trump refused, forcing cancellation of the event.

NBC News said yesterday it had received a statement from the clinical director at the National Institutes of Health and lead infectious diseases expert Anthony Fauci that they had "a high degree of confidence" that Trump is now "not shedding infectious virus."

Trump and the NBC host will be socially distanced at the outdoor venue and the audience will wear safety masks, NBC said.

Biden has been frequently testing for coronavirus and reporting negative results since Trump's illness.

NGO Forum for Public Health
Central Office, 4/6 Block - E, Lalmatia, Dhaka - 1207
TENDER INVITATION FOR SUPPLYING OF HYGIENE KITS
Date: 14-10-2020
NGO Forum for Public Health (NGOF) is a national level NGO hereby invites sealed quotation from the bonafide dealers / suppliers / sole distributors / agents for Supplying of 700 sets of "Hygiene Kits" to Mymensingh City Corporation (MCC) under "Covid - 19 Oxfam Response to the Pandemic" project supported by OXFAM. Tender schedule will be available at free of cost at the reception desk of NGO Forum for Public Health, 4/6 Block - E, Lalmatia, Dhaka - 1207 within 22 October, 2020 during office hours. Sealed tender containing technical and financial proposals in 2 separate envelopes must be submitted within 25 October, 2020 by 05 pm. NGO Forum for Public Health will follow the terms & condition of the tender schedule as well as the rules and procedure of procurement policy of its own and the participating dealers / suppliers / sole distributors / agents should obey the same including the security deposit issue for delivery of "Hygiene Kits". This circular and associated tender schedule will be treated as the integral part of the tender documents and the authority is not bound to award work order to the lowest bidder as the evaluation will be done as per the manuals of NGO Forum for Public Health. The decision of the authority of NGO Forum for Public Health will be treated as final binding and no entity will be entitled to solicit any legal action against it. The authority also reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders or can cancel the total tender process without assigning any reason whatsoever.
Procurement Department, NGO Forum for Public Health

Their hard labour goes unrecognised

FROM PAGE 12

Anjum Banhi Chakma, project coordinator of Trinamul Unnayan Sangstha, Khagrachhari, in the Chittagong hill tracts, said an overwhelming number of indigenous women belonging to Chakma, Marma and Tripura communities cultivate rice, vegetables and fruits in their subsistence gardens and Jhum.

"They engage in almost every step of the production, such as seed collection and preservation, sowing, planting, reaping, carrying crops home, sorting and selling," she said.

Although their numbers are higher than the male farmers, they are not usually registered as farmers. "In a few cases, their husbands are registered in the database and state support is also given to them," she added.

The DAE does not have specific data on the rural indigenous women's farming activities, she said.

However, Arunangkor Chakma, deputy assistant agriculture officer of DAE Panchhari upazila of Khagrachhari, said the number of female farmers in Panchhari upazila is 763 and the number of the male farmers is 9,577.

"We are enlisting only one name from an agricultural family and that's why the number of the male farmers is high," he said.

To tackle the impact of Covid-19, he said they will provide five kg aush paddy seeds and 10 kg fertilizers free of cost, Tk 835 for seeds and fertilizers under a project for creating homestead gardens and Tk 1,500 for creating a fence and overall caring of the garden.

He, however, could not give any information on how many women would receive the support from his office.

Sarah Marandy, director (social development), Gram Bikash Kendra, a grassroots organisation in Parbatipur of Dinajpur, stressed the need for focussing on the indigenous women who are mostly landless farmers and engage in seasonal agriculture work.

For example, Santal women find it hard to maintain a livelihood, she said, adding due to agricultural automation, they don't have work for more than 3-4 months a year and the outbreak of Covid-19 only made matters worse.

Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, said rural indigenous women are the custodians of indigenous identity and culture.

"But sadly, in Bangladesh, there is no policy or specific measures targeted to protect their rights, health and economic development, even though they endure hours of back-breaking works both at home and on the fields," he said.

Sanjeeb said at least 25,000 rural indigenous women should be enlisted as beneficiaries of the Tk 5,000 crore stimulus package for small-holder farmers.

HC upholds life term based

FROM PAGE 12

Ferdoushi Rupa told The Daily Star that the HC verdict and observation regarding the punishment of the convict without medical report of the rape victim was applicable for this particular case, not for all other similar cases.

Besides, the Supreme Court's Appellate Division may make final observation and guidelines about this issue, she said.

DAG Jannatul said the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Tribunal (Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal)-1 of Khulna on March 13, 2019, convicted Ibrahim and sentenced him to life imprisonment in the case filed for the rape of a 15-year-old child in Dakop area of the district in 2006.

The tribunal also fined him Tk 20,000 and said he will have to serve two more years in jail in case he fails to pay it.

The tribunal delivered the judgment under Section 9(1) of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain (Women and Children Repression Prevention Act), 2000.

Ibrahim then filed an appeal with the HC challenging the tribunal verdict.

DAG Jannatul said the victim was eight days late for filing the case due to pressure from the local influential people.

The hospital concerned had not conducted the medical test of the victim as the police did not cooperate with her, said the DAG, adding that the medical test of the rape victim is to be conducted in 48 hours of the rape incident under the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000.

Asked for comments, Ibrahim's lawyer Aminul Haque Helal told this correspondent that he was yet to receive the full text of the HC verdict.

Save the Children
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Save the Children International (SCI) is hereby inviting for tender from interested experienced bona fide vendors for Providing **Internet Bandwidth and Data Networking Services** for its offices and other locations in Bangladesh.
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Special Instruction: (a) All activities in connection with the said procurement of Goods will be guided as per the SCI's Procurement Policies. **(b)** If it is not possible to receive & open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstances, the same will be received and opened on the following working date at same time and same place.
Senior Manager, Procurement & Supply Chain

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PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 8181658-61, 8181664-69, Fax: 8181678, Website: <http://www.pksf-bd.org>, www.facebook.com/PKSF.org
Request for Application (RFA)
(Selection of Individual Consultant: National)
Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) is hereby requesting for applications in sealed envelope from competent national individual consultants for providing short term consulting services for the study on **"Artemia preparation/culture in Bangladesh for crab hatchery"**, Package No: PKSF/PACE/SD-09 under a project titled "Promoting Agricultural Commercialization and Enterprises (PACE) Project of PKSF jointly financed by PKSF and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Individual Consultant Selection (ICS) method and Standard Request for Application (SRFA:PS-3) Documents for selection of Individual Consultants on Lump-sum Contracts of the Public Procurement Rules-2008 of the Government of Bangladesh will be followed for evaluating applications.
The Detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) and Request for Application (RFA) document is obtainable from the office of the undersigned during office hours: 10:00 am to 4:30 pm at free of cost. It will be also available at PKSF website (<http://tender.pksf-bd.org>). Interested eligible consultants are requested to submit RFA along with all necessary documents in sealed envelope to the office of the undersigned directly or by courier/mail by 2:00 PM on or before 01 November 2020.
Any kind of persuasion will be treated as disqualification of the applicant. PKSF reserves all rights to accept or reject any or all applications or cancel this advertisement without assigning any reasons whatsoever.
Dr. Md. Jashim Uddin
Deputy Managing Director



This important bridge, situated between two upazilas of Nilphamari and Dinajpur, over Bhulli river in Nilphamari Sadar upazila has been lying unrepared since it collapsed in 2017. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Important bridge lies broken for 3 years

Over 5 lakh inhabitants of Nilphamari and Dinajpur have been suffering immensely

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Thousands of people of different villages in Nilphamari and Dinajpur have been suffering immensely since the concrete bridge over Bhulli river in Nilphamari Sadar upazila collapsed about three years ago.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found the east end of the bridge is under Khokshabari union in Nilphamari's Sadar upazila while its west end situated in Alokdihi union under Dinajpur's Khansama upazila.

Besides, around 5 lakh inhabitants of 14 surrounding villages on both side of the bridge use it.

There are three educational institutions, like Sonardanga Government Primary School, Kukardanga High School and Dakkhinpara Girls' High School, at Nilphamari end, while two other institutions like Purba Bashuli Government Primary School, Basuli High School and an orphanage situated on the other end of the bridge.

Khokshabari Union Parishad Chairman Badiuzzaman Prodhan said although the 160-foot-long bridge was damaged during the flood in 2017, the authorities concerned are yet to repair it.

As alternative, villagers, living on both ends of

the bridge, jointly built a makeshift bamboo bridge in place of the collapsed concrete bridge to go to their destinations.

As no mechanized vehicles can move through the bamboo bridge, people have to cross it on foot or on rickshaws and bicycles.

HM Shafiqul Islam, headmaster of Basuli High School in Dinajpur's Khansama upazila, said several hundred students from different areas of Nilphamari come to the school crossing the narrow bamboo bridge.

A number of students fell in the river while crossing the bridge and were later saved by locals, he added.

Farmer Idris Ali, 65, of Pashchim Basuli village in Dinajpur said, many farmers like him owned croplands on other side of the river in Nilphamari.

In absence of permanent bridge, they face serious difficulties to carry their crops, power tiller or fertilizers to and from their croplands, he added.

Contact, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) Upazila Engineer Harunur Rashid said they have already sent a project proposal to construct a new concrete bridge over Bhulli river and waiting for its approval.

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আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্র আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ এর রাজস্ব খাতের আওতায় চলতি ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থবছরের জন্য পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়োগ করে নির্বাচিত ২৪টি প্যাকেজে চলমান প্রকল্পের নিবিড় পরিবীক্ষণ কার্যক্রমের নিমিত্ত আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্র আহবান করা হচ্ছে। "ক" চিহ্নিত প্রকল্পগুলো একাধিক এলাকা ভিত্তিক ও "খ" চিহ্নিত প্রকল্পগুলো একক এলাকা ভিত্তিক।

প্যাকেজ নং	প্যাকেজের নাম/চলমান প্রকল্পের নিবিড় পরিবীক্ষণ	সেক্টর
এসআর-১	আমিনবাজার-মাওয়া-মংলা ৪০০ কেভি সম্মান লাইন	সেক্টর-১ (ক)
এসআর-২	মাতরবাড়ি ২ * ৬০০ মেঃ ওঃ আন্টা সুপার ক্রিমিক্যাল কোল ফায়ার্ড পাওয়ার প্রজেক্ট	সেক্টর-১ (খ)
এসআর-৩	সকল জেলায় মুক্তিযুদ্ধ কমপ্লেক্স ভবন নির্মাণ প্রকল্প	সেক্টর-১ (ক)
এসআর-৪	ওয়েস্টার্ন বাংলাদেশ ব্রিজ ইমপ্লিমেন্ট প্রজেক্ট	সেক্টর-২ (ক)
এসআর-৫	দোহাজারী হতে রামু হয়ে কল্লবাজার এবং রামু হতে মায়ানমারের নিকটে গুনদুম পর্যন্ত সিলেট লাইন ভূয়েলপেজ ট্র্যাক নির্মাণ (১ম সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-২ (ক)
এসআর-৬	কর্ণফুলী নদীর তলদেশে বহুসংখ্যক সড়ক ট্যানেল নির্মাণ (১ম সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-২ (ক)
এসআর-৭	আরবান রেজিওয়েল প্রকল্প (ডিএনসিসি পোর্ট)	সেক্টর-৩ (ক)
এসআর-৮	আব্রাহামিকার ভিত্তিতে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ পল্টা অবকাঠামো উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প-২ (১ম সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-৩ (ক)
এসআর-৯	আরবান আইমারি হেলথ কেয়ার সার্ভিসেস ডেলিভারি প্রজেক্ট (২য় পর্যায়)	সেক্টর-৩ (ক)
এসআর-১০	গড়াই নদী ড্রেজিং ও তীর সংরক্ষণ প্রকল্প (১ম সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-৪ (ক)
এসআর-১১	বাংলাদেশ ওয়েদার এন্ড ক্লাইমেট সার্ভিসেস রিজিওনাল প্রজেক্টঃ পানি বিজ্ঞান সম্পর্কিত তথ্য সেবা ও আগাম সতর্কীকরণ ব্যবস্থা শক্তিশালীকরণ (কম্পোনেন্ট-বি) (১ম সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-৪ (ক)
এসআর-১২	কৃষক পর্যায়ে উন্নতমানের ডাল, তেল ও মসলা বীজ উৎপাদন সংরক্ষণ ও বিতরণ, (৩য় পর্যায় প্রকল্প) (১ম সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-৪ (ক)
এসআর-১৩	ক্রিমিক্যাল কন্ট্রোলস সার্ভিস ডেলিভারি প্রোগ্রাম	সেক্টর-৫ (ক)
এসআর-১৪	"বিটাক চক্রাম, খুলনা ও বগুড়া কেন্দ্রে নারী হোস্টেল স্থাপন" শীর্ষক প্রকল্প	সেক্টর-৫ (ক)
এসআর-১৫	ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিলিং ডিফেন্স ডুবুড়ী ইউনিট সম্প্রসারণ	সেক্টর-৫ (ক)
এসআর-১৬	জলাশয় সংস্কারের মাধ্যমে মৎস্য উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি (২য় সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-৬ (ক)
এসআর-১৭	সুনামগঞ্জ জেলার তিনটি বেসরকারি কলেজের অবকাঠামো উন্নয়ন	সেক্টর-৬ (খ)
এসআর-১৮	বিক্রেতাপির গ্রামীণা প্রশিক্ষণার্থীদের উন্নয়ন	সেক্টর-৬ (খ)
এসআর-১৯	চট্টগ্রাম শহরের জলাবদ্ধতা নিরসনকল্পে খাল পুনঃ খনন, সম্প্রসারণ, সংস্কার ও উন্নয়ন	সেক্টর-৭ (খ)
এসআর-২০	ঢাকার মিরপুরস্থ ৯নং সেকশনে ১৫টি ১৪ তলা বিশিষ্ট আবাসিক ফ্ল্যাট নির্মাণ প্রকল্প (২য় পর্যায়)	সেক্টর-৭ (খ)
এসআর-২১	বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান মেডিক্যাল সেন্টার, রাজশাহী স্থাপন প্রকল্প	সেক্টর-৭ (খ)
এসআর-২২	অংশীদারিত্বমূলক পল্টা উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প-৩ (পিআডিপি-৩) (১ম সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-৮ (ক)
এসআর-২৩	সাসটেইনেবল ফরেস্ট এন্ড লাইভলিহুড (সুফল)	সেক্টর-৮ (ক)
এসআর-২৪	৬৪টি জেলায় জেলা সমাজ সেবা কমপ্লেক্স নির্মাণ (১ম সংশোধিত)	সেক্টর-৮ (ক)

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- নিবিড় পরিবীক্ষণ কাজের জন্য আগ্রহী প্রতিষ্ঠানের আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্রের সাথে (ক) পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের ই-ইউআরএ এ সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা, (খ) প্রয়োজনীয় বুদ্ধিবৃত্তিক এবং পেশাগত সেবার পরিসরের বিস্তারিত বর্ণনামূলক সার্ভিসের বিবরণ (গ) বর্ণিত কাজ সম্পাদনের জন্য যোগ্যতার প্রমাণস্বরূপ সম্ভাব্য আবেদনকারীদের অভিজ্ঞতা, সম্পদ, পেশাদার জনবল ও সেবা প্রদানের সামর্থ্য, (ঘ) প্রয়োজনীয় জনবলের শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও পেশাগত অভিজ্ঞতা, (ঙ) হালনাগাদ আয়কর সনদপত্র, (চ) বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, (ছ) বাৎসরিক টার্নওভার, (জ) প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রোফাইলসহ সকল সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি সংযুক্ত করতে হবে এবং
- Expression of Interest (EOI) বন্ধ খামে ভরে প্রতিটি প্রকল্পের জন্য পৃথকভাবে নিম্নলিখিত ত্রিকোণায় জমা দিতে হবে।

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iii.	মহাপরিচালক, পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন সেক্টর-৩, ভবন নং-০৫, কক্ষ নং-২৩, বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ।	প্যাকেজ নম্বর এস.আর. ৭, ৮ ও ৯ jahangeer.kobir@imes.gov.bd
iv.	মহাপরিচালক, পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন সেক্টর-৪, ভবন নং-১২, কক্ষ নং-১৪, বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ।	প্যাকেজ নম্বর এস.আর. ১০, ১১ ও ১২ afzal.hossan@imes.gov.bd
v.	মহাপরিচালক, পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন সেক্টর-৫, ভবন নং-০৫, কক্ষ নং-১৪, বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ।	প্যাকেজ নম্বর এস.আর. ১৩, ১৪ ও ১৫ matiar.rahman@imes.gov.bd
vi.	মহাপরিচালক, পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন সেক্টর-৬, ভবন নং-১১, কক্ষ নং-২৫, বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ।	প্যাকেজ নম্বর এস.আর. ১৬, ১৭ ও ১৮ al.mamun@imes.gov.bd
vii.	মহাপরিচালক, পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন সেক্টর-৭, ভবন নং-০৫, কক্ষ নং-১৩, বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ।	প্যাকেজ নম্বর এস.আর. ১৯, ২০ ও ২১ mamjid4135@imes.gov.bd
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- খামের উপর প্রকল্পের নাম ও আবেদনকারী পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম স্পষ্টভাবে লিখতে হবে। EOI মূল্যায়নের ভিত্তিতে পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের শর্ট লিস্ট করা হবে। শর্ট লিস্টেড পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের অনুকূলে Request for Proposal (RFP) ইস্যু করা হবে;
- EOI এর বিস্তারিত তথ্য www.cptu.gov.bd এবং www.imes.gov.bd website-এ পাওয়া যাবে। এ বিষয়ে প্রয়োজনে ৪৮১১৮৮৪৮ টেলিফোন নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করা যাবে;
- পরামর্শক প্রতিষ্ঠানের বন্ধ খামে ভরে প্রতিটি প্রকল্পের জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ Expression of Interest (EOI) পৃথকভাবে প্রতিটি প্যাকেজের বিপরীতে অনুচ্ছেদ-৫ এ বর্ণিত কাগজপত্রসহ ৭ (সাত) সেট আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ পত্র ডাকযোগে/সরাসরি আগামী ০২/১০/২০২০ তারিখ দুপুর ০২:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ডাক ক্রমিকের (I-VIII) নং ক্রমে বর্ণিত সংশ্লিষ্ট পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন সেক্টরের কর্মকর্তার (প্যাকেজ নম্বর অনুযায়ী) সরাবরে প্রেরণ করতে হবে এবং
- কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন প্রকার কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে প্রয়োজনবোধে সকল কিংবা যে কোন আবেদন বাতিল ঘোষণা করতে পারবে।

তাহমিনা জাকারিয়া
 সিনিয়র সহকারী সচিব
 বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ
 ভবন-১১, কক্ষ-৩
 শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা
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জিডি-১৬৪০

Water ambulance given driver after two years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The Netrakona district administration has finally given temporary appointment to a driver for driving the water ambulance of Khaliajuri Upazila Health Complex.

The water ambulance had been sitting idle at Khaliajuri Upazila Health Complex for more than two years.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, during her visit to Khaliajuri in 2017, pledged to arrange a water ambulance for the healthcare facility so that critical patients from flood-prone and low-lying areas in Khaliajuri upazila would be able to avail medical services during monsoon.

As promised, the ambulance was sent to the hospital the same year, under "Community Based Health Care Project", but it had remained stationary there as the government hospital had no scope to hire a driver for it, according to locals.

People of Khaliajuri -- an upazila dotted with several large water bodies or haors -- usually remain confined to their homes due to flooding during the monsoon months and boats become their



only means of communications during those months.

Ataul Gani Osmani, health and family planning officer in Khaliajuri upazila, said a driver has been appointed for the ambulance on temporary basis as there is no official sanction for a driver post at the hospital.

The 31-bed hospital on an average has 20 inpatients and oftentimes, critical patients are sent out to hospitals in different districts for more advanced care.

With water all around, family members of patients suffer immensely to find a suitable

transport to take their loved ones to a distant hospital, he also said.

Khaliajuri Upazila Nirbahi officer AHM Arifur Rahman said he never saw the ambulance operational during his two years of service in the upazila.

Thanks to the initiative of the district administration, which recently hired a driver for the ambulance, patients from any part of the upazila, especially in remote areas of Chakua, Gazipur and Krishnapur, will be able to avail the ambulance service for Tk 1,000.

The vessel has the capacity to provide oxygen support and carry

necessary medical personnel along with the patient, he added.

Contacted, Netrakona Civil Surgeon Tajul Islam Khan, however, claimed that the ambulance had been in operation on various occasions under special arrangement.

He also said that a letter has already been sent to the authorities concerned, seeking the creation of a permanent driver post for the water ambulance.

Nazim Uddin, former chairman of Krishnapur Union Parishad, said the upazila headquarters is 16 kilometres away from Krishnapur and it is extremely difficult to transport critical patients to a hospital, especially during the monsoon.

"It would be a huge respite for the impoverished residents of haor areas that lack most basic services and amenities."

While talking to this correspondent, Netrakona Deputy Commissioner Kazi Md Abdur Rahman assured that the ambulance would not be left idle for a single day from now on. "I have already asked the upazila administration to monitor its operation regularly."

Ninth-grader gang-raped

FROM PAGE 12 They also recorded the incident and blackmailed the girl for money, the law enforcers added.

Mohammad Imanul Kabir, inspector (investigation) of Moheshkhali Police Station, said the victim's mother filed a case with the police station in this regard. The trio was held by locals and handed over to police on Monday.

Meanwhile, a Bogura court yesterday sent a man to jail for allegedly raping a grade-II student in the district's Sherpur upazila.

The accused Rajib Sheikh, 30, of the upazila's Sughat union, also gave confessional statement to the district's senior judicial magistrate court

yesterday. Police said Rajib raped the girl on October 10.

In Lalmonirhat, a court on Tuesday sent a former bank official to jail for sexually harassing four girls at Tepatari village in Kaliganj upazila of the district.

The accused Mobarak Ali, 50, of the same village, had remained absconding since December last year as the incident came into limelight then.

Police said he used to play with children at his village home. He took girls to his room luring them with chocolates and biscuits. Then, he sexually harassed them.

On December 3, 2019, the father of a victim filed a case with police against him.

On Tuesday, he surrendered before

the district Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal.

Later, the judge of the tribunal sent him to jail, said Arju Mohammad Sajjad, officer-in-charge of Kaliganj Police Station.

In Kushtia, a court yesterday sent a man to jail on charge of raping a woman in Daulatpur upazila.

The accused Rustom Ali, of the same upazila, raped her on Monday night, said police.

In Barishal, five youths were sued on Tuesday over a rape incident at Kazirhat upazila.

Police said a youth named Babu raped the woman with the help of four of his friends in the early hours of Monday.

In Narayanganj, a court yesterday

granted two-day remand to an elderly person who was earlier arrested on charge of raping two sisters in Shiddhirganj Police Station area.

In Patuakhali, a woman yesterday filed a police complaint against a local Youth League leader for attempting to rape her early yesterday in Golachipa upazila's Kacharikanda area.

In Laxmipur, Suman, 26, was arrested for allegedly raping a mentally challenged teenage girl.

Accused Suman works in a tailoring shop in Dhaka's Nilkhet area. The victim's father filed a case with Raipur Police Station in this connection.

[Our correspondents from Cox's Bazar, Lalmonirhat, Bogura, Kushtia, Barishal, Narayanganj and Patuakhali contributed to this report]

Panic grips

FROM PAGE 12 just a local fisherman," he said.

"We handed over Shambu's body to his family after autopsy, but no one came to take the other body," he added.

Pragoti Chakma, chairman of Naniarchar upazila, said, "Panic and tension gripped the locals after the gunfight on Tuesday."

Meanwhile, in a statement, UPDF claimed that Ashapurna Chakma was one of its members while Shambu was a fisherman, who had no links with the party.

The injured army soldier is Shahabuddin, member of a patrol team, who was shot in his left shoulder. He was taken by helicopter to Chattogram Combined Military Hospital (CMH) for treatment, the ISPR said in the release issued after the gunfight.

The incident took place around 5:30pm in Burigah area of the upazila when a patrol team of Rangamati Army Zone went to the spot to nab some armed extortionists of UPDF (Prasit Khisa) based on a tip-off, the release read.

Sensing the presence of the army, the UPDF men fired at them, prompting them to retaliate, triggering the gunfight, the release added.

কৃষি সমৃদ্ধি

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
 Gopalganj, Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira & Pirojpur Agricultural Development Project
 Department of Agricultural Extension, Khulna
 (H R Patoary Mansion, Plot-D 43, Mujgunni, Boyra, khulna)

e-Tender Notice (Re-Tender)

Memo No: DAE/GKBSPADP/Buried Pipe-31/2020/ 236 Date:14.10.2020

This is to notify all Concerned that the following tender has published through e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Sl. No	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of Works/ Package Description	Tender Publication Date	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date and Time	Opening Date and Time	Method of Tender
1.	ID: 505042 DAE/GKBSPP/Buried pipe-31-3/2020/236	Construction of Buried Pipe line (150 mm dia 200mm UPVC Pipe) for irrigation Purpose Under "GKBSPADP" at 18 (Eighteen) sites in 9 (Nine) Upazilas of Bagerhat District	15.10.2020 12.00	25.10.2020 17.00	27.10.2020 12.00	27.10.2020 12.00	OTM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender (Re-Tender) will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Further information and Guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP Help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

14.10.2020
 (Alomgir Biswas)
 Project Director
 Phone: 041-763512
 Email: pdgkbsp@gmail.com

GD-1634

TALIBAN ASSAULT ON AFGHAN CITY Thousands flee as fighting rages

AFP, Lashkar Gah

Tens of thousands of people in southern Afghanistan have fled their homes following days of heavy fighting between the Taliban and security forces, officials said yesterday, as violence continues to soar despite ongoing peace talks.

Taliban militants launched a series of attacks on the city of Lashkar Gah in restive Helmand province on Sunday night, prompting the US to call in air strikes to defend Afghan forces.

The fighting triggered an exodus by local residents who crammed onto motorcycles, taxis and buses.

"More than 5,100 families or 30,000 people... have fled the fighting so far," Sayed Mohammad Ramin, director of the refugees department in Helmand, told AFP.

"Some families are still living in the open in the streets in Lashkar Gah, we don't have tents to give them."

Local resident Hekmatullah said he was forced to flee after a mortar hit his neighbour's house, killing two women.

Fighting was ongoing in at least four districts yesterday, Afghan officials said, adding that security forces have repelled repeated Taliban assaults in the area.

Under a deal the Taliban signed with Washington in February, the insurgents are not supposed to hit urban areas and are meant to keep violence down.

Talks began last month between the Taliban and Afghan government in Doha but appear to be stalled as the two sides have struggled to establish a basic framework for negotiations.

Republicans fear a 'blue wave'

Senate's hold at stake too as Trump campaign failing to hurt Biden as it did to Clinton

AGENCIES

Donald Trump is running out of days to change the current trajectory of the presidential election. Polls have grown so one-sided that Republicans fear a Democratic "blue wave" in November with control of the Senate also at stake.

The current polling average is a 10.6-point advantage in favor of former vice president Joe Biden and running mate Senator Kamala Harris.

On 29 September, that average was just 6.1 points. Only one more major scheduled event remains on the calendar prior to the election day, the last debate on October 22.

Presently, Biden's favorable/unfavorable number is positive (more favorable) by 6.9 points,

US ELECTION 2020

18 DAYS TO GO



People wait in line to cast their ballots for the upcoming presidential election as early voting begins in Texas, on Tuesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

according to the averages compiled by RealClearPolitics.

Compare that with Clinton in 2016, when the former first lady was viewed more unfavorably on the eve of the election by 12.9 points. That's a swing of 19.5 points in favor of the Democrats. The president's average is 42.9 per cent favorable to 54.2 per cent unfavorable (minus -11.3).

If the current polling proves

prophetic, the GOP's control of the Senate is nearly certain to be lost. Republicans hold a 53-47 Senate advantage, but trail in four races for Republican-held seats and are bogged down in tossup contests in five other states.

According to the current electoral map based on polling averages, Democrats would turn the currently red GOP Senate seats in Arizona, Colorado, Maine, North Carolina

and Iowa blue. Their only loss in this model would be in Alabama. That would give the Democrats a 51-49 edge.

Few days earlier, even conservative Senator Ted Cruz, a Trump loyalist, warned on national television that Republicans could face a "bloodbath of Watergate proportions" in November.

With less than three weeks left until the election, Americans have cast more than 10 million early votes in person and by mail across the country, according to data compiled by the US Elections Project.

Meanwhile, Republican Senator Mitt Romney said Tuesday that the world is watching the "vile" US political scene with "horror" and attacked Trump's behavior.

"It is time to lower the heat," said Romney, one of the few prominent Republicans to have frequently criticized Trump since his 2016 election win.

Former president Barack Obama would "soon" join Joe Biden's campaign trail, a report said.



Focus on 'preparing for war'

Xi tells troops

CNN ONLINE

Chinese President Xi Jinping has called on troops to "put all (their) minds and energy on preparing for war" in a visit to a military base in the southern province of Guangdong on Tuesday, according to state news agency Xinhua.

During an inspection of the People's Liberation Army Marine Corps in Chaozhou City, Xinhua said Xi told the soldiers to "maintain a state of high alert" and called on them to be "absolutely loyal, absolutely pure, and absolutely reliable."

The main purpose of Xi's visit to Guangdong was to deliver a speech yesterday commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, which was established in 1980 to attract foreign capital and played a vital role in helping China's economy become the second-largest in the world.

The White House notified US Congress Monday that it was planning to move ahead with the sale of three advanced weapon systems to Taiwan, according to a congressional aide, including the advanced High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS).

In a stern response from Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian called on Washington to "immediately cancel any arms sales plans to Taiwan" and cut all "US-Taiwan military ties."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel approves 2,166 new West Bank settler homes

Israel approved 2,166 new homes in settlements across the occupied West Bank yesterday, official figures sent to AFP showed, ending an eight-month lull in settlement expansion. The approvals came less than a month after the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed agreements to normalise relations with Israel, which in return pledged to freeze its plans to annex swaths of the West Bank. NGO Peace Now says the settlement uptick signals Israel's rejection of Palestinian statehood and deals a blow to hopes of a wider Israeli-Arab peace. There were no comments from UAE, Bahrain till filing this report.

China, Russia elected to UN rights council; S Arabia fails

China and Russia were elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council on Tuesday, but support for Beijing dropped by more than 20 percent compared with a 2016 vote and Saudi Arabia failed in its bid to win a seat on the Geneva-based body. The 193-member UN General Assembly also elected Ivory Coast, Gabon, Malawi, Cuba, Bolivia, Uzbekistan, France and Britain to the 47-member council. Senegal, Nepal, Pakistan, Ukraine and Mexico were re-elected for a second three-year term. Council members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. The new members will begin their term on Jan. 1, 2021.

EU agrees Russia sanctions over Navalny poisoning

The EU yesterday agreed to impose sanctions on six people and one entity over the poisoning of Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny with a Novichok nerve agent, diplomats told AFP. Ambassadors from the 27 EU countries approved sanctions after France and Germany proposed measures last week, saying Russia was responsible for the poisoning. In line with usual EU practice, those targeted by the sanctions -- travel bans and asset freezes -- will not be named until the measures take legal effect today, but they are likely to be Russian officials.

Heavy rains kill 12 in India

Heavy rains have killed at least 12 people in southern India and caused widespread flooding in the city Hyderabad, home to major IT companies and startups, government officials said yesterday. A wall collapsed killing nine people in Hyderabad, the capital of the southern state of Telangana, while the other three were killed in separate incidents, they said. Torrential rain also battered the neighbouring state of Andhra Pradesh. Many parts of Hyderabad had received more than 25 cm (10 inches) of rainfall over the past 24 hours, a government official said, while floodwater inundated main roads and caused widespread chaos. Authorities in Hyderabad declared a two-day holiday starting from yesterday and asked residents to stay indoors.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Karabakh fighting widens

Azerbaijan strikes inside Armenia after accusing Baku of trying to attack gas, oil pipelines; Russia again urges calm

AGENCIES

Azerbaijan yesterday said it had destroyed missile launchers inside Armenia that were targeting its cities and vital gas and oil pipelines, as fierce fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh risked widening beyond the disputed region.

Hundreds have already lost their lives in two weeks of fighting, and continued clashes have rendered almost meaningless a humanitarian ceasefire agreed in Moscow last week.

Armenia confirmed that military positions inside the country had been hit but denied its forces had been firing into Azerbaijan. It warned that it too could start targeting military sites inside its adversary's territory.

Clashes over Nagorno-Karabakh -- where Armenia-backed separatist fighters are battling Azerbaijani forces -- have been largely confined



to areas in and around the region since a fresh outbreak of fighting started last month.

Direct confrontations between Armenia and Azerbaijan risk spiralling into an all-out, multi-front war with devastating consequences for both sides.

Russia yesterday again appealed to both sides to observe the humanitarian ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh, which is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan.

The latest fighting, which erupted on September 27, has been the most intense since a 1994 ceasefire, claiming more than 600 lives, including more than 70 civilians, according to a tally based on partial tolls from both sides.

Each side has accused the other of targeting civilian areas with shelling, missile and rocket attacks.

Panicked Europe battens down against 2nd wave

Another vaccine trial halted over safety issues

AGENCIES

European countries have begun to close schools and cancel surgeries, going well beyond curbs on social life, as overwhelmed authorities face their nightmare scenario of a Covid-19 resurgence right before the onset of winter.

Most European nations eased lockdowns over the summer to start reviving economies already heading for unprecedented downturns and job losses from the pandemic's first wave. But the return of normal activity - from packed restaurants to new university terms - fuelled a sharply-rising spike in cases all over the continent.

Bars and pubs were among the first to shut or face earlier closing in the new lockdowns, but now the surging infection rates are also testing governments' resolve to keep schools open and non-Covid medical care going.

Moscow authorities said yesterday they would introduce online learning for many students starting on Monday, while Northern Ireland announced a two-week schools' closure.

French President Emmanuel Macron was expected to unveil further restrictions yesterday, with media reporting that city curfews are under consideration. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces opposition calls to impose another national lockdown in England, but has so far resisted.

Meanwhile, another late-stage Covid-19 medical trial has been paused. US pharmaceutical firm Eli Lilly on Tuesday suspended its Phase 3 trial of its lab-produced antibody treatment in hospitalised patients over an unspecified incident.

Meanwhile, expert yesterday said the restrictions imposed during the pandemic have caused an unprecedented fall in greenhouse gas emissions in the first half of 2020 -- larger than during the 2008 financial crisis and even World War II.

J&K ex-CM vows to restore Article 370

NDTV ONLINE

Soon after her release from a 14-month detention, former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti has vowed to continue her struggle for the restoration of Article 370, which gave a special constitutional status, and the resolution of the Kashmir issue.

"We all have to pledge that we will take back what was snatched illegally, undemocratically and unconstitutionally on August 5 last year. We will also have to work for the resolution of Kashmir issue for which thousands of people have laid down their lives," Mehbooba, President of the People's Democratic Party, said in a short audio message on Twitter late Tuesday night.

Mehbooba also demanded the release of Kashmiri people languishing in jails.

India ended the special status of J&K and bifurcated it into federally-ruled territories on August 5 last year.

THAI ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT PROTEST

Rival groups face off on Bangkok streets

REUTERS, Bangkok

At least 10,000 Thai protesters marched to the prime minister's office yesterday demanding he stepped down, while thousands of royalist supporters also turned out in their biggest showing since anti-government demonstrations began three months ago.

The two camps gathered face-to-face at Bangkok's Democracy Monument, which has become a focal point for the protests. They kept apart barring some brief scuffles, but the standoff was an uncomfortable reminder of a decade of street violence between supporters and opponents of the establishment that ended in a coup in 2014.

Meanwhile, thousands of yellow-clad supporters of King Maha Vajiralongkorn lined the streets to catch a rare glimpse of the monarch as his motorcade drove through Bangkok.

One royalist leader, Buddha Issara, said the protesters could demand democracy but must not call for reforms of the monarchy, as some have done.

"They must not touch the institution," he told reporters.



Student leaders, boarded on a truck, lead a procession as pro-democracy protesters march towards the Government House during an anti-government rally in Bangkok, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক
 ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটি সচিবালয়
 প্রধান কার্যালয়
 ঢাকা

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-১২১/২০২০ তারিখঃ ১২/১০/২০২০

রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড-এ 'সিনিয়র অফিসার (লিগ্যাল অফিসার)' পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের উদ্দেশ্যে প্রার্থীদের লিখিত পরীক্ষা গ্রহণের সময়সূচি সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটি সচিবালয়ের তত্ত্বাবধানে রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড এ 'সিনিয়র অফিসার (লিগ্যাল অফিসার)' পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে Online-এ প্রাপ্ত আবেদনসমূহ যাচাইকৃত্তে যোগ্য বিবেচিত প্রার্থীদের ২ ঘণ্টাব্যাপী ২০০ নম্বরের লিখিত পরীক্ষা আগামী ২৩/১০/২০২০ তারিখ শুক্রবার অপরাহ্ন ৩ঃ০০টা হতে ৫ঃ০০টা পর্যন্ত নিম্নোক্ত ৩টি কেন্দ্রে অনুষ্ঠিত হবেঃ

ক্রঃ নং	কেন্দ্রের নাম	ঠিকানা	রোল নম্বর	পরীক্ষার্থীর সংখ্যা
১।	Bangladesh Bank High School (বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়)	Motijheel, Dhaka.	১০০১-১৯০০	৯০০ জন
২।	Lalmatia Girls' High School (লালমতিয়া উচ্চ বালিকা বিদ্যালয়)	9/15, Block-D, Lalmatia, Mohammadpur, Dhaka.	১৯০১-৩৭০০	১,৮০০ জন
৩।	Anwara Begum Muslim Girls' High School & College (আনোয়ারা বেগম মুসলিম বালিকা উচ্চ বিদ্যালয় ও কলেজ)	13, Nazimuddin Road, Dhaka.	৩৭০১-৪৮২২	১,১২২ জন

উক্ত পরীক্ষার প্রবেশপত্র বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের ওয়েবসাইট (<https://erecruitment.bb.org.bd>) এ ইতোমধ্যে আপলোড করা হয়েছে। প্রার্থীগণ পরীক্ষা গুরুত্ব অব্যাহিত পূর্ব পর্যন্ত উক্ত ওয়েবসাইট হতে তাদের প্রবেশপত্র ডাউনলোড করতে পারবে। উল্লেখ্য, পরীক্ষার হলে প্রবেশের পূর্বে প্রয়োজনীয় চেকিং কার্যক্রম সম্পন্ন করার জন্য পরীক্ষা গুরুত্ব কমপক্ষে ১ ঘণ্টা পূর্বে পরীক্ষার্থীকে পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্রে উপস্থিত হতে হবে এবং সামাজিক দূরত্ব মেনে সারিবদ্ধভাবে কেন্দ্রের অভ্যন্তরে প্রবেশ করতে হবে। প্রবেশপত্র ব্যতিরেকে কোনো প্রার্থীকে পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে দেয়া হবে না। পরীক্ষার্থীদেরকে মোবাইল ফোন, ক্যালকুলেটর, স্মার্ট ওয়াচ বা অন্য কোন ইলেক্ট্রনিক ডিভাইস, প্রবেশপত্রের একাধিক কপি বা অতিরিক্ত কাগজ নিয়ে পরীক্ষার হলে প্রবেশ না করতে নির্দেশনা দেয়া যাচ্ছে।

উল্লেখ্য, মাস্ক পরিধান ব্যতিরেকে কোন প্রার্থীকে পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্রে প্রবেশ করতে দেয়া হবে না।

আরফ হোসেন খান
 মহাব্যবস্থাপক, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক
 ও
 সদস্য সচিব, বিএসসি

ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২০-২৮৪৯
 তারিখঃ ১৪/১০/২০২০
 জিডি-১৬৩৮

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হারানির শিকার হলে কিবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

খুলনা প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
 খুলনা-৯২০৩
 নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের রাজস্বখাতের আওতাধীন নিম্নবর্ণিত পদসমূহে বিধি মোতাবেক প্রদেয় বেতন ও অন্যান্য আর্থিক সুবিধাদিসহ সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত ও স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম	বেতন স্কেল (২০১৫ অনুযায়ী)	পদ সংখ্যা
১।	সহযোগী অধ্যাপক, সিলিন্ডার ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগ	৫০০০০-৭২২০০/-	১টি
২।	সহযোগী অধ্যাপক, মেকানিক্যাল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগ	৫০০০০-৭২২০০/-	১টি
৩।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক (স্নায়ু-১ ও সহযোগী অধ্যাপকের বিপরীতে-২), সিলিন্ডার ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগ	৩৫৫০০-৬৭০১০/-	৩টি
৪।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক, কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগ	৩৫৫০০-৬৭০১০/-	১টি
৫।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক, ইনস্ট্রুমেন্টাল এন্ড কমিউনিকেশন ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগ	৩৫৫০০-৬৭০১০/-	১টি
৬।	সহকারী অধ্যাপক (সহযোগী অধ্যাপকের বিপরীতে), আরবান এন্ড রিজিওনাল প্ল্যানিং বিভাগ	৩৫৫০০-৬৭০১০/-	১টি
৭।	প্রজ্ঞাপক, পলিত বিভাগ	২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	২টি
কর্মকর্তা:			
৮।	সহকারী পরিচালক (অডিট)	২৯০০০-৬০৪১০/-	১টি
কর্মচারী:			
৯।	অফিস সহায়ক, ফায়ার ল্যান্ড	৮২৫০-২০০১০/-	১টি

প্রতিটি পদে আবেদন করার জন্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নির্ধারিত ফরম, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা, নিয়োগের শর্তাবলী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট (www.kuet.ac.bd/career) হতে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। আবেদনপত্র জমা দেয়ার সময় ক্রমিক নং- ০১ হতে ০২ এ উল্লিখিত পদের জন্য ৩৫০ টাকা, ক্রমিক নং- ৩ হতে ৮ এ উল্লিখিত পদের জন্য ২৫০/- (দুইশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা এবং ক্রমিক নং ৯ এ উল্লিখিত পদের জন্য ১৫০/- (একশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা অত্র বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অনলাইন পেমেন্ট সিস্টেম (www.payment.kuet.ac.bd/recruitment) এর মাধ্যমে টাকা জমা দিয়ে রশিদটি আবেদন পত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে। আগামী ০২/১১/২০২০ইং তারিখ বিকাল ৫:০০টার মধ্যে আবেদন পত্র রেজিস্ট্রার দপ্তরে ইমেইল (recruitment@kuet.ac.bd)-এ জমা দিতে হবে।

(জি. এম. শহিদুল আলম)
 রেজিস্ট্রার
 খুলনা প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।

GD-1636



Great Barrier Reef has lost half of its corals

AFP, Brisbane

Half of the Great Barrier Reef's corals have died over the past 25 years, scientists said yesterday, warning that climate change is irreversibly destroying the underwater ecosystem.

A study published in the Proceedings of the Royal Society Journal found an alarming rate of decline across all sizes of corals since the mid-1990s on the vast World Heritage-listed reef off Australia's northeastern coast.

Larger species, such as branching and table-shaped corals, have been affected hardest -- almost disappearing from the far northern reaches of the reef.

"They're typically depleted by (up to) 80 or 90 percent compared to 25 years ago," report co-author and James Cook University professor Terry Hughes told AFP.

Aside from its inestimable natural, scientific and environmental value, the 2,300-kilometre-long (1,400-mile-long) reef was worth an estimated \$4 billion a year in tourism revenue for the Australian economy before the coronavirus pandemic.

BOOK REVIEW: HISTORY

THE OTTOMAN
WHO CONQUERED HISTORY

STEVE DONOGHUE

Yale University Department of History chair Alan Mikhail's new book *God's Shadow: Sultan Selim, His Ottoman Empire, and the Making of the Modern World* (Liveright, 2020) takes a much-welcomed fresh look at Selim I, a figure of signature cultural and historical importance in Turkish history.

Selim falls between two titanic figures in Ottoman history: his grandfather, Mehmed II, conquered Constantinople in 1453, in what Mikhail quite rightly calls an "earth-rattling victory, a conquest both actual and symbolic." And Selim's son went on to become known to history as Suleyman the Magnificent, "his legacy shaping the empire until its end in the 20th century." (And this is not to discount Selim's father Bayezit, who added ferociously to the empire's territories during his reign).

In writing what he refers to as a revisionist account of Selim, Mikhail seeks to rescue this pivotal figure both from the reflexive antipathy with which the West has viewed Islam and the Ottomans for centuries and also from the hagiography of the *Selimname* (Mikhail styles it throughout his book as the "Selimname"), a collection of primary sources about Selim's life. Mikhail's organising approach here will strike many of those Western readers as astounding: "The ineluctable fact," he writes, "is that the Ottoman Empire made our modern world—which is, admittedly, a bitter pill for many in the West."

God's Shadow captures the seemingly contradictory aspects of Sultan Selim I's life and rule with scrupulous scholarship and a storyteller's spirit.

More than virtually any other single figure in its history, Selim expanded and solidified that empire in a series of battles and conquests that still make for stirring reading in the hands of an author as skilled as this one. Mikhail tells the story of the curious combinations that governed Selim's life: he was a scholar but also a merciless warrior; he was a sensitive poet, but also a tyrant who issued a death penalty for anyone caught using a printing press in his kingdom; he tried to adhere to a strict, warm morality, but his path to power was paved with dead bodies, including those of his own brothers and nephews. The shadow he casts over history is immense, and yet his reign lasted for only eight years, and when he died in 1520 he was still a fairly young man.

God's Shadow captures these and other seemingly contradictory aspects of Selim's life and rule with scrupulous scholarship and a storyteller's spirit.

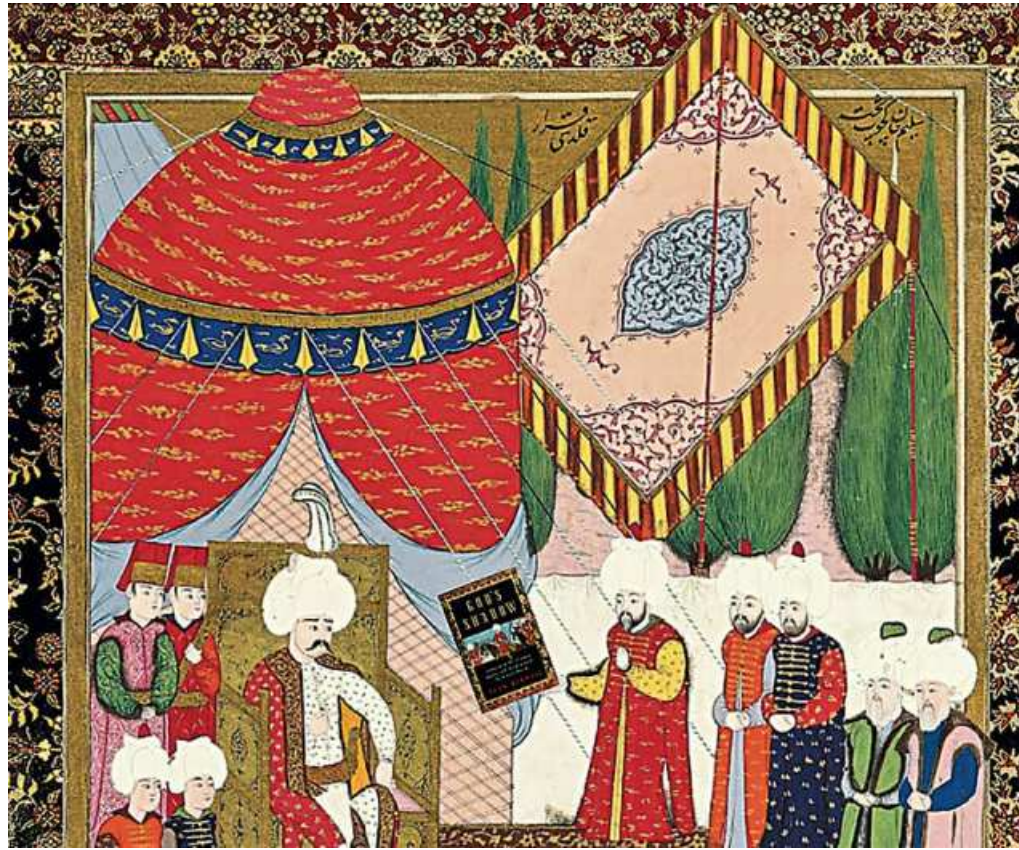


PHOTO DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

Selim was born around 1470 as Bayezit II's youngest son, and Mikhail's narrative makes clear that the *Selimname's* frequent allusions to Selim's will to rule are no mythological additions: ambition seems to have been his animating principle even from his early youth. His impatience with the preference shown to his older half-brothers is palpable in Mikhail's account; Selim filled a number of important military commissions on behalf of his father, but when he visited his father at the Topkapi Palace overlooking the Bosphorus in 1512, he had only one goal in mind. Mikhail relays the scene with delicate skill: "Speaking quietly, Selim presented his father with a dramatically insolent choice: either abdicate now—willingly, peacefully, and with dignity—and discreetly leave the palace for a comfortable retirement, or watch Selim's Janissaries seize the palace and empire by force, raving the city on their way," he writes. "Should Bayezit choose the latter path, Selim added, he could not guarantee his father's safety—or even his life."

Bayezit chose the better part of valour and became the first Ottoman sultan to leave the throne alive. At 46, Selim was finally ruler of the empire.

What followed was a series of iconic battles—the Battle of Chaldiran in 1514, where Selim's forces, using guns and artillery, broke

the growing power of Shah Ismail and gained his enormous territories in Iran, Azerbaijan, and Armenia; and the Battle of Ridanieh in 1517, where Selim wrested from the Mamluk Empire great swaths of land from Syria to Egypt (including Mecca and Medina). Through these and other key campaigns, Selim gave the Ottoman Empire a sprawl beyond even the dreams of his father.

As Mikhail makes clear throughout, he did it all with an eye turned warily on the West, to Islam's "civilizational kin and territorial rival", Christianity. *God's Shadow* does an invigorating job of redressing the balance between those two powers. As Mikhail puts it, "In the decades around 1500, it was not the Venetians nor the Spanish nor the Portuguese who set the standard for power and innovation; it was Islam."

This portrait of Selim and the world he did so much to shape feels like a great gust of fresh air in off the Bosphorus. It's no hagiography itself—the Selim in these pages is, among other things, a brute and a slave-trader—and it all feels bracingly real.

Steve Donoghue is a book critic whose work has appeared in the Boston Globe, the Wall Street Journal, the Christian Science Monitor, the Washington Post, and the National.

BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

A concoction of medicine, history, and drama in 'A Ballad of Remittent Fever'

MONEESHA R KALAMDER

Ginger, lemon juice, or a dash of honey added to a warm cup of tea. Some variation of this remedy to common cold is a familiar one in Bengali households. I have often wondered about the history of these home remedies, and by extension, the subcontinent's ancient practice of Ayurveda within modern health science. I was excited to pick up Ashoke Mukhopadhyay's *A Ballad of Remittent Fever* (Aleph Book Company, 2020), which attempts to explore this idea alongside invoking thoughtful questions about how we view and deal with illnesses and epidemics.

Translated from the original *Abiram Juvor Roopkotha* in Bangla by Arunava Sinha, the story is told over the span of a hundred years, the narrator shifting between three different timelines and generations of doctors from the Kolkata-based Ghoshal family. A trait shared by all three men is that they defy traditions in their quest to learn and heal.

The author probes and demonstrates how we came to be in an age that is nothing short of medicinal wonder. In the late 19th century, Dwarikanath Ghoshal helps his patients battle malaria and a cholera epidemic, and his son combats Spanish flu in the battlefields of World War I. It is easy to forget that diseases that are easily treatable now were not always so. To progress into the future, we must recognise and make use of our relationship with the past. As one doctor in the book notes, "... many of today's treatments owe their origins to Stone Age exorcisms." Modern medical science and practices are results of consistent effort and perseverance in a fight where facts and reason are weapons. This observation is something to be cognizant of now more than ever as we face another global epidemic. All of this is explored and mused upon in *Ballad*.

Mukhopadhyay also offers vivid descriptions of Kolkata and West Bengal spanning from the late 19th to the latter half of the 20th century, offering readers a fascinating glimpse into how society and daily life has changed with the advent of technology.

While the monologues and conversations on medical breakthroughs are thoroughly enjoyable, the plot and protagonists in *Ballad* leave much to be desired. Character portrayals barely scratch the surface; none of them experience development or growth and the women in the text have no flaws. This is a form of benevolent sexism common in Bengali male writers. The flow of the story is reminiscent of Sunil

Gangopadhyay's historical novels, but the plot lacks focus, with loose story threads that are never resolved. The reader will be less frustrated if they read the novel as a chronicle of illnesses that have plagued humankind time and time again, and how we have fought back. Even then, the ending is rather removed from the discussion of medicine, which is a bit unsettling.

Seasoned translator Arunava Sinha appears to be at home within the story. He manages to translate some distinct linguistic quirks of the original Bangla, which often made me forget that I was reading the book in English. However, the language feels rather awkward in some places and this distracts from the reading experience.

Overall, *Ballad* has a promising

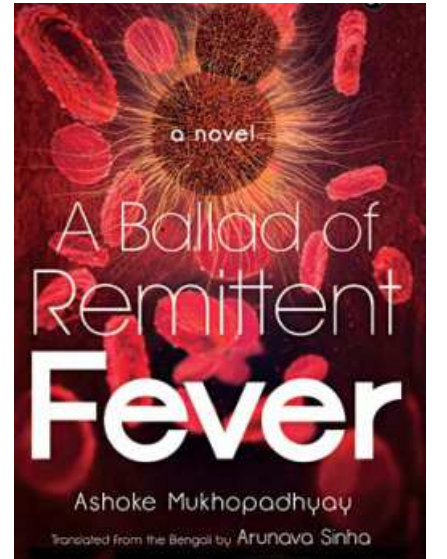


PHOTO COURTESY: ALEPH BOOK COMPANY

start and it is an enjoyable read if you want to encounter thought provoking questions or get an insight into how we've handled illnesses as a historically superstitious society over the last two centuries. However, be wary of expecting resolutions to all your queries. The book would have worked better if the author attempted a different style of storytelling instead of a long-winded novel that began as an ode to the practice of medicine, and became a tale of family drama midway through, executing neither successfully.

A Ballad of Remittent Fever is available at Bookworm Bangladesh, Dhaka.

Moneesha R Kalamder is editor-in-chief at Rantages. She reads everything and mostly writes comedy. Reach her at mkalamder9.75@gmail.com.

MUSINGS

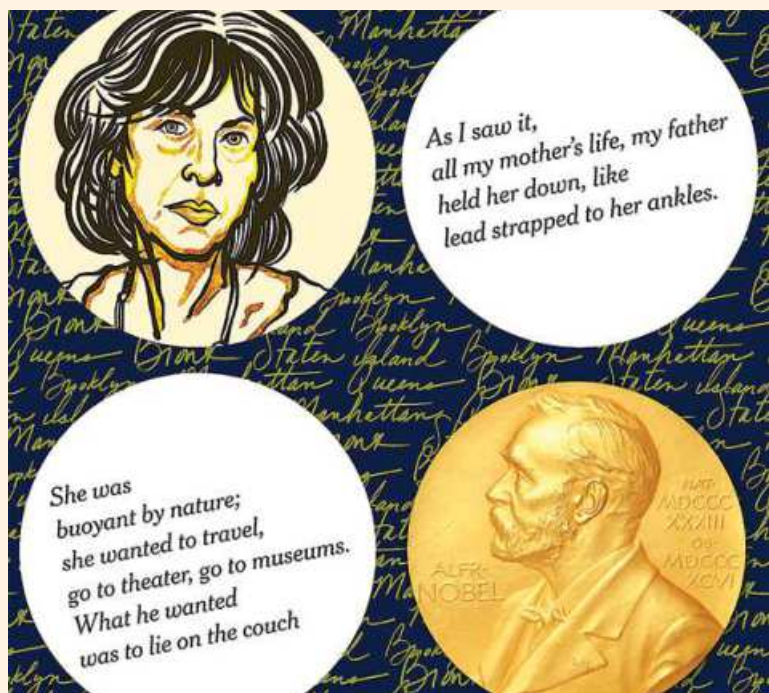


ILLUSTRATION: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

On discovering the poetry of Louise Glück, Nobel Prize in Literature 2020

ALIZA RAHMAN

Louise Glück's poetry is at once deeply personal and ubiquitous. Articles explaining her work demur from calling it confessional, and they may be right. It doesn't feel like the thoughts and feelings of another; the speaker confessing seems more vulnerable, as if they're opening up directly to you. The sceneries she weaves are odd and alluring, and behind the deceptively simple lines are layers of meaning.

Read the full article on *The Daily Star* website, or on Daily Star Books on Facebook and @thedailystarbooks on Instagram.

THE BOOK REPORT

The mango-powered superhero you need to know about

NUREN IFTEKHAR

Of all the notable works done on visual media in our country, *Shabash* by Mighty Punch Studio came as a welcome surprise to me. From the tone of storytelling to the beautiful visuals, Mighty Punch Studios paint a unique stroke.

The story of wacky Shabash, who gained his superpower after consuming a magic mango which stemmed from a meteor (yes, you read that right), is not the one we will be talking about here, however. We'll be looking at Ms Shabash, who shares the same origins in a parallel universe set in Dhaka. Like Shabash, who bears with him a goofy, endearing personality, Ms Shabash too wants to help the 'mango people', but she also has to deal with the challenges that every woman in Bangladesh faces without superpowers. From casual harassment and patriarchal mindset to forced beauty standards, Ms Shabash encounters caricatured antagonists who don't stray far from reality.

Ms Shabash stands out in her simplicity. She has not been whitewashed into a fairer complexion. She is not described as overtly beautiful. Her personality isn't defined just by the fact that she's a woman. Her adventures, accompanied by her colourful companions and magical powers involving mangoes and fairies, pull off a lighthearted, humorous tone that is accessible to people of all ages. And the comic book's portrayal of prevalent misogynistic traits manages to send an important message without sounding patronising.

"We believe that through art, entertainment, storytelling and endearing characters, we can not only captivate audiences but also inspire them to bring about positive change in the world," Samir Asran Rahman, CEO and creative



ILLUSTRATION: ASIFUR RAHMAN

director at Mighty Punch Studios, tells *The Daily Star*.

They have made the 42-page third installment of the *Ms Shabash* comic series free for download on their Facebook page, in light of the ongoing conversation around sexual violence. They have also cropped the panels to ease the reading experience. Written by Samir Asran Rahman and illustrated by Asifur Rahman, the book follows Dhakaites

celebrating Pehela Boishakh at Ramna Park, when some men decide to assault the women enjoying the festivities. Suddenly, a shalwar-kamiz clad Ms Shabash crashes the scene to fight the villains. "These creeps don't respect women because they've only been taught to objectify them by society, not regard them as equal human beings. Broken bones will not change that mentality," she later points out to her friend.

"While most of our comics promote moral values, empathy, and kindness (in a subtle way of course, because no one likes being preached to), we have tackled more serious issues such as harassment, albeit in a way that is suitable for children," Rahman explains.

In all of their running series, Mighty Punch's artwork takes influence from old cartoon network series as well as local art. Rahman shares how their attempt at the traditional art style of *Tepa Putul* seeped into other projects, resulting in an amalgamation of local and western visual styles.

So what's next for Mighty Punch Studios? Rahman shares, "While we don't plan to stop making comic books, we are concentrating more on animation these days. Eventually, we want to be able to pitch a series to a streaming platform like Netflix." A pilot episode of *Ms Shabash* is also in the pipeline. With unique projects including *Shabash*, *Ms Shabash*, *Lathial*, *Team Dalim*, and *Captain Kathal*, Mighty Punch Studios are doing an excellent job of mixing humour and socially conscious stories in an accessible and colourful format.

Nuren Iftexhar is a contributor for Daily Star Books.

Gag on social media an erosion of our constitutional rights

Obstructing freedom of speech is an affront to democracy

THE statement from the home ministry forbidding people from spreading “false, fabricated, confusing and inciting statements” on social media about government, military, police officials and members of other law enforcement agencies is yet another worrying development in the erosion of freedom of speech in Bangladesh. The statement condemns “false and baseless news about the security forces, which is threatening to ruin the peace in the country, and spreading fear, concern and confusion among the general public.” It adds: “the government has observed the activities of such people with patience, and has come to the conclusion that it is necessary to take legal action against such people to maintain stability, domestic security and public well-being.”

One might be forgiven for thinking that perhaps what is truly spreading fear, concern and confusion among the general public is the continued silencing of dissenting voices, even as violence against women, widespread corruption and enforced disappearances continue—all of which have been the subjects of heated debates on social media platforms over the past few weeks. Even when you can get past the sheer absurdity of trying to police public online platforms, something that tech giants like Facebook and Twitter are failing to do, the questions that come up are numerous. In this “post-truth”, modern world, what counts as “false, fabricated, confusing and inciting statements”? Based on what legal guidelines or written codes can the government decide what kind of statements are ruining the peace or harming public well-being? What sort of “legal action” will be taken in these scenarios—does this simply give way to greater use of the draconian Digital Security Act? Will this give more scope to cover up abuses of power and hide inconvenient truths?

This is not the first time we have seen the government respond to criticism and widespread debate and discussion on a certain issue, especially on social media, by simply shutting it down. In the wake of the coronavirus crisis in Bangladesh, when the public health sector was facing severe scrutiny and the health ministry was widely criticised for mishandling the pandemic, the health minister ordered all health officials to stop talking to the media, and the public administration ministry asked all secretaries to ensure that no public servant can talk to or write in the media without prior approval. This month, the Department of Secondary and Higher Education issued a circular forbidding students and teachers from writing, sharing or even “liking” anything that “ruins the image of the government or the state”, or “disrespects any important person, institution or profession” on social media. Now, it is the general public who have been told to watch what they say or write.

The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees the right of every citizen to freedom of speech and expression. Regulating what ordinary citizens can post, share or even “like” on social media is not the symptom of a democratic nation but rather an Orwellian society. We urge the authorities to immediately rescind this unconstitutional statement, which is an attack on our fundamental right to free speech.

Construction workers' safety still neglected

Why do they have to work without protective gear?

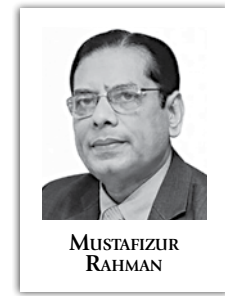
A photo published in this paper yesterday of a construction worker standing precariously on the edge of the roof of an under-construction building, in the capital's Manda area, speaks volumes about the building owners and construction companies' apathy towards the safety of workers. The man in the picture is seen unloading concrete mixture from the bucket of a mini-crane without wearing any protective gear, and no other protective measures are visible to make sure he does not fall off the roof. It means that an accident can take place anytime. Only a few days ago, three construction workers died falling from a 10-storey under-construction building in Dhaka's Dhanmondi area.

Time and again, we have brought the issue of construction workers' safety to the attention of the authorities concerned, but unfortunately, the situation has not improved. While deaths and injuries of workers are common occurrences in the city and elsewhere, no substantial measures are visible anywhere in ensuring their occupational safety and compensating them for workplace injuries. According to Occupational Safety, Health, and Environment (OSHE), a total of 1,196 construction workers lost their lives in workplaces between 2005 and 2016, and 147 of them died in 2016 alone. In 2017, the number of deaths increased to 179.

The construction workers were also the ones worst hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, as they hardly got any government or other assistance to feed themselves and their families in the past few months. Clearly, the sector is a neglected one when it comes to ensuring the workers' rights and well-being. The Labour Act, unfortunately, covers only the formal sector and the construction sector, still being an informal one, does not get the necessary attention of the policymakers.

The situation must change and the government must bring them under a legal framework to ensure their occupational safety and compensate them for any injuries. For that, the Directorate of Labour, a regulatory agency under the labour ministry, should have a database of construction workers. The associations looking after the welfare of informal workers in the sector must also bring the issue of workplace safety to the fore. At the same time, the construction firms, big or small, must also prioritise their workers' safety, which is in no way a privilege but a right of the workers.

TRIPS extension: A window of opportunity for Bangladesh



MUSTAFAZUR RAHMAN

ON October 15-16, 2020, the Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights of the WTO (WTO-TRIPS Council) will be holding an important meeting that has a special interest for the LDCs, in particular for graduating LDCs such as Bangladesh. The meeting will initiate discussion on the extension of waivers granted to the LDCs under Article 66.1 of the TRIPS Agreement.

According to the TRIPS Agreement of 1995, WTO members are to comply with various provisions relating to enforcement of intellectual property rights in connection with international trade. The Agreement had introduced intellectual property law into multilateral trading system and requires members to enforce various disciplines with regard to patents, licence, trademarks, geographical indicators, designs, dispute resolution, etc. In view of the special needs of LDCs, Article 66.1 of the Agreement accorded LDC members a ten-year exemption (till 2005) from most obligations under the Agreement. The waiver allows LDCs exemptions from applying provisions of the TRIPS Agreement except for most favoured nation (MFN) and national treatment obligation. The flexibility took into consideration economic, financial and administrative constraints of the LDCs, and allowed them time to put in place necessary institutional and technical capacities. In response to requests by the LDCs, the general transition period was subsequently extended twice as per decisions of the TRIPS Council—in 2005, for eight years, till July 2013, and following this, in June 2013, for another eight years, till July 1, 2021.

It can be noted that in addition to the general transition period, LDCs were also granted a specific transition period for pharmaceutical products in 2001, in accordance with the WTO's Doha Ministerial Conference declaration on TRIPS Agreement and Pharmaceutical Products. This was initially granted for 15 years, till January 2016, followed by a second extension for 17 years, till January 1, 2033. The pharmaceutical decision provided legal cover for waiver of patent in producing pharmaceutical products, and for using compulsory licensing exclusively for exports.

Bangladesh is one of the very few LDCs that have been able to take advantage of both the TRIPS Article 66.1 and, more particularly, the pharmaceutical waiver. In view of the above, and in consideration of Bangladesh's upcoming graduation, the discussion to be held in the TRIPS Council is thus of heightened interest to

our country.

The 2015 decision on TRIPS and Pharmaceuticals specifically mentions that an LDC will no longer be eligible to enjoy the benefits if it ceases to be an LDC prior to expiry of the transition period (“whichever is earlier”). This would mean that Bangladesh will not be able to benefit from the pharmaceutical waiver once it graduates out of the LDC group in 2024, although the waiver

as an immediate motivating factor. The submission argued that pre-existing difficulties of the LDCs have been exacerbated by the various health-related adverse impacts of Covid-19, lockdown, supply-chain disruptions, and demand-side constraints. It mentioned that LDCs need more time to build the technology base and supply-side capacities which will enable them to garner the required strength to comply with the TRIPS

of entry into force of the decision of the General Assembly to exclude a member from the LDC category. This would allow Bangladesh to enjoy the benefit of the waiver till 2036 should the country graduate in 2024.

The other critically important point for Bangladesh relates to the TRIPS waiver for pharmaceuticals. As was noted above, the TRIPS and Pharmaceuticals decision categorically mentions that whilst the transition period has been extended till December 31, 2032, a beneficiary LDC will cease to enjoy the waiver if it is no longer an LDC. This would mean that Bangladesh will no longer be eligible to enjoy the pharmaceutical waiver following its graduation in 2024. Bangladesh obviously has a keen interest to bring this issue to the TRIPS Council; it is understood that it has already made a submission to this effect. Whether other LDCs will demonstrate solidarity with Bangladesh in equal measure—as in the case of extension of the aforesaid Article 66.1 of the TRIPS Agreement—is not clear since the majority of the LDCs don't have a strong domestic or export-oriented pharmaceutical industry, as is the case with Bangladesh. In view of this, whether the upcoming discussion on TRIPS Article 66.1 transition may be taken advantage of to include the pharmaceutical issue in an all-encompassing TRIPS extension decision is worth thinking about.

If Covid-19 is the key area of concern and the reference point in considering the TRIPS Article 66.1 extension, in the course of the upcoming discussions in the TRIPS Council members ought to also give equal importance to the interests of LDCs with regard to medicines and production of pharmaceutical items. While most LDCs do not have a strong pharmaceutical industry of their own, they have benefited significantly from the import of low-cost pharmaceutical products from Bangladesh under compulsory licence and otherwise. Indeed, in FY 2020, about 29 percent of Bangladesh's global export of pharmaceutical products, worth about USD 136.0 million, went to 27 LDCs. Bangladesh should use the upcoming discussion on transition as an opportunity to bring on board the issue of extension of the TRIPS and Pharmaceuticals decision from the vantage point of graduating LDCs.

Bangladesh and other graduating LDCs should ask for an extension of pharmaceuticals waiver till the end of the transition period (till end of 2032)—irrespective of the status of the WTO member as LDCs or graduated LDCs—similar to the one that has been sought in the duly motivated request placed before the TRIPS Council in view of the TRIPS Article 66.1.

Prof. Mustafizur Rahman is Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).



About 29 percent of Bangladesh's global export of pharmaceutical products, worth about USD 136.0 million, went to 27 LDCs in FY 2020.

PHOTO: REUTERS

has been granted till end of 2032. This will understandably have important repercussions for our pharmaceutical industry as it will then be required to comply with patent and licence requirements as per the TRIPS Agreement.

The 2016 decision of the TRIPS Council stipulates that an LDC can submit a *duly motivated request* for an extension of the transition period (which, as was noted before, ends in 2021). However, this can be done as long as a country is an LDC and not after it had already graduated. Accordingly, now is an appropriate time for the LDCs to take the initiative for yet another extension of the TRIPS waiver. This the LDC group in the WTO has done, and the *duly motivated request* proposal will be discussed in the upcoming TRIPS Council meeting.

It needs to be recalled, and appreciated, that Bangladesh has played a key role in the submission to the TRIPS Council made by Chad on October 1, 2020 on behalf of the LDC group in the WTO. The submission rightly mentions the adverse implications of Covid-19 pandemic on the economies of the LDCs

obligations.

In this connection, it may also be noted that India and South Africa, both (non-LDC) developing country members of the WTO, have also submitted a proposal seeking waiver as regards compliance with TRIPS Agreement—concerning such areas as copyrights, industrial design, patents and protection of undisclosed information—citing the adverse impacts of the pandemic.

Sometimes it is said that, in WTO, countries get not what they deserve but what they negotiate. LDCs will, therefore, need to demonstrate a unified stand in the upcoming discussion in the TRIPS Council, irrespective of their graduating or non-graduating status. Bangladesh and other graduating LDCs should remain proactively engaged since they have high stakes in the outcome of the discussions.

It is important to note that the text of the duly motivated request states that in view of the TRIPS provision (other than Articles 3, 4 and 5 relating to MFN and national treatment), LDCs seek waiver for as long as they remain an LDC, and for a period of twelve years from the date

DEADLINE FOR GLOBAL ACTION

Can countries deliver on their climate change pledges?



SALEEMUL HUQ

THE historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which was agreed by all the countries that were part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in December 2015, had two major outcomes. The first was to try to keep global atmospheric temperature to below 2 degrees Centigrade and, if possible, below 1.5 degrees. The second major agreement was from the developed countries to provide a minimum of USD 100 billion a year, starting from 2020 onwards, to support the developing countries to tackle climate change through both mitigation and adaptation.

The main vehicle for each country to report on its own plans and pledges to contribute towards these global goals was by submitting a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), in which actions to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in each country would be pledged.

It was also agreed by all the countries that these issues would be addressed and revised every five years. Thus, all countries have until the end of 2020 to submit their respective updated NDC from the initial one submitted in 2015, and it is vital that all countries do so within the deadline. It is even more important that they raise their level of pledges to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases well over what they pledged in 2015 if the global goal is to be kept below 2 degrees, or even below 1.5 degrees.

If all countries fail to raise their respective ambitions by December 31, 2020, then the next point to do so will not be before 2025, which will be far too late.

Hence last week, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her capacity as the head of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) launched a major global initiative called #MidnightClimateSurvival to get every country to submit their respective NDC by midnight on December 31. She did this at a high-level virtual event along with the Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Gutierrez as well as the Head of the UNFCCC Patricia Espinosa and the former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who now chairs the Global Centre on Adaptation (GCA),

would rejoin the Paris Agreement after the country's election in November.

The declaration of this call for every country to meet their obligations by midnight on December 31 was also matched by the pledge by all CVF countries that they would submit their own NDCs before this deadline despite the fact that their own emissions of greenhouse gases are minuscule compared to the major emitting countries. Nevertheless, they have taken the moral high ground to do what is right and are challenging all other

the developed countries who made that promise in 2015 need to provide information on how much each of them has committed, how much was for mitigation and how much for adaptation—and also, which developing countries were provided with support and through which channels. While the Green Climate Fund (GCF) was supposed to have been the main vehicle for delivering these funds, they are also using the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank as well as bilateral development assistance agencies. Hence, it is extremely difficult to track how much climate finance is being made available and through which channels.

From what information can be found, it is clear that the total amount of funding made available so far is still far short of the USD 100 billion target, while over 80 percent of that has gone to support mitigation activities and less than 20 percent to adaptation in the most vulnerable developing countries. Even worse, the proportion of that measly amount of funding for adaptation was less than 2 percent of the global funds for supporting developing countries to tackle climate change.

Hence, the CVF countries are also demanding that the developed countries fulfil their pledges to provide at least USD 100 billion by December 31 and ensure that at least half of it goes to the most vulnerable communities in the most vulnerable developing countries to adapt and become more resilient to the adverse impacts of climate change.

December 31, 2020 is thus a day of reckoning when we will see if the leaders of each and every country in the world can rise to their once-in-a-generation responsibility or not.

Saleemul Huq is Director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development at the Independent University, Bangladesh.

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the managing partner for the CVF.

The call for global action was also joined by the head of government of the Marshall Islands, who was the immediate past head of the CVF, as well as that of Ethiopia, who was the chair prior to that. The CVF is led by a Troika of the current chair and two previous chairs. The heads of government were also joined by ministers from many other CVF countries as well as the former president of the Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed, who was the founder of the CVF and is now its thematic Ambassador for Ambition.

Also present was the former vice president of the United States, Al Gore, who said he was hopeful that his country

countries to follow their example.

It is, however, uncertain how many countries will submit their NDCs on time, and even more uncertain how ambitious they will be, but there are a number of positive signs from China and the European Union who have both recently announced significant ambitious pledges to become Net Zero emitters within the next few decades. If all other countries follow their example, then it is possible to reach the goal on time.

The other pledge about delivering the USD 100 billion is also supposed to be achieved by midnight on December 31, although we are not still sure how much will actually be delivered. Hence,

RTI IN BANGLADESH

We need an independent and neutral Information Commission

SHAMSUL BARI AND RUHI NAZ

FROM its onset in early 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has damaged trust in governments. As governments fumbled with different approaches, citizens' distrust of them increased in tandem. Allegations of misinformation, disinformation and lack of information polluted the atmosphere.

The chaos, however, gave hope to transparency enthusiasts that the experience would help governments realise the extraordinary importance of proper information sharing in democratic governance and hence the need for them to pay greater attention to proper implementation of the Right to Information (RTI) Act. Sadly, there was no indication of this in Bangladesh during the observance on September 28 of the International Day for Universal Access to Information. The statements and utterances made at various gatherings and seminars organised for the occasion provided no indication that the three key stakeholders of the RTI regime in the country—citizen groups, the government, and the Information Commission—had drawn lessons from the Covid-19 experience. An important opportunity was lost.

Citizens' groups could have drawn focus on glaring examples of lack of transparency on many aspects of the government's handling of the crisis. Instead, a handful of NGOs involved in promoting RTI stuck to their usual concern about obstacles that citizens regularly encounter in using the law. In their submission at the meeting organised by the Information Commission, where top government officials were present, NGOs demanded remedial measures but lacked vigour and direction. With a law more than a decade old, such deference to public authorities, including the Information Commission, must come to an end. It's high time citizens considered collective measures, however politely, to seek removal of the impediments they have endured for a long time.

Reports on other activities NGOs organised for the occasion revealed they are

still largely focused on awareness-building. However, the law is yet to make an impact on peoples' minds and the little practice that has emerged is limited to a small number. This is evident from the fewer than 8,500 RTI requests recorded annually in the country. As a result, except for a handful of persons who have used the law and, therefore, are aware of the obstacles they must encounter, there are not many who would agitate for remedial measures. In neighbouring India, on the other hand, the RTI law has gained so much traction among the population that when the government simply flagged an intent to amend the law last year, hundreds of agitated citizens took to the streets to thwart the process.

complainants who see it to be their last bastion of hope in obtaining information from recalcitrant public officials. There is a general consensus among RTI watchers in the country that the implementation of the law would be greatly helped if the commission could take appropriate measures to deal with citizens' concerns voiced over the years. Establishing a regular dialogue with NGO representatives and RTI enthusiasts and activists will facilitate the process.

The Information Commission, like public authorities generally, tend to see activists as nuisance and brush them off as troublemakers. It is important to remember, however, that activists play a particularly important role in the success of RTI law

The law clearly states the importance of its impartial role in resolving disputes between citizens demanding information and public authorities refusing to supply them.

the commission is able to shed its image of being a government body, which it is not. The law clearly states the importance of its impartial role in resolving disputes between citizens demanding information and public authorities refusing to supply them. But an image of impartiality cannot be created if the commission displays greater deference, as many allege, towards government officials in their handling of complaint cases. It cannot be created if the commission continues to send text messages to citizens as Govt. Info. Nor can it be helped by putting advertisements in newspapers where government officials and Information Commissioners share messages with the people side by side on the same page, with no representation of citizen groups. Neutrality should not only be practiced but also seen to be practiced. The RTI Act is a citizen-friendly law which clearly calls for a citizen-friendly Information Commission.

On its part, the government would do well to make its commitment to the law clear to the people, and more particularly to public authorities, on a regular basis. It can do so, inter alia, through a proper selection process of impartial Information Commissioners, as provided in the law. Installing a reward system for officials who discharge their responsibilities under the law properly would help the process. Assuring the commission of full freedom to apply the law, including penalising disobedient public officials, would be of added value. In addition, selecting at least one Commissioner with legal background would help greatly since the application of the law, particularly drafting decisions on complaint cases, which are of a quasi-judicial nature, requires legal acumen.

There can be no better way for the government to instigate beneficial changes in governance through non-revolutionary means than by helping citizens to do so through a seamless use of the RTI Act. It's time the law received the attention it richly deserves from all concerned.

Shamsul Bari and Ruhi Naz are Chairman and RTI Coordinator respectively of Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB). Email: rib@citech-bd.com



PHOTO: COLLECTED

The more polite voicing of concern by the Bangladeshi NGOs was, however, offset by a hard-hitting article which appeared in this newspaper a few days later (October 4, 2020). In that piece, entitled "RTI requests and the reality on the ground", two RTI activists shared their frustrations about the RTI process and their sad experiences with concerned authorities. They cited examples of unfriendly, even negative, gestures by the Information Commission towards

in many countries. In some, they serve as paid agents to obtain relevant information from public authorities on behalf of their clients. Nothing in the law, including that of Bangladesh, proscribes them from doing so. In the US, the majority of information requests are submitted by paid agents. In Bangladesh too, a significant portion of RTI requests are submitted by activists and by individuals who are helped by NGOs. Just as politicians seek to represent people's concern

on governance issues, RTI activists promote the watchdog role of citizens as envisioned in the law.

The importance of activists for the promotion of RTI globally is evident from the existence of activist groups in most countries and of international forums where they exchange views and strategies. In fact, *The Daily Star* article mentioned before was posted on an important website and read by activists from all over the world. Activist groups collect information from such sources to draw their opinion on the implementation of the law in specific countries. These are then reflected in the data that UNESCO has been tasked to gather to measure the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16.10—which seeks to assess the efficacy of RTI law in national contexts. The Bangladesh data is expected to be submitted next year.

The government and the people must realise that the RTI Act is not aimed at unearthing corruption but to stop it from happening at all through systemic change. It is clear that such a realisation has not sunk properly in the minds of many.

To make that happen, it is the Information Commission that will have to play the key role. It must undertake serious efforts to remove obstacles identified by citizens so that they feel comfortable to use the law. This should not be difficult if, to begin with,

Protests against rape give us hope. But is that enough?



TASMIAH T. RAHIMAN

AFTER the video of the Noakhali gang rape went viral, people from all walks of life were rightly outraged and joined online and offline protests demanding reforms in the relevant law against women and children repression

as well as the highest punishment for rapists. Not just the rise in incidents of rape but the sheer brutality of these crimes also sent shockwaves through the society. In the Noakhali case, the victim is a wife and a mother. She was stripped, gang-raped and beaten while it was videotaped by the perpetrators. What makes a rapist or rapists feel so empowered so as to videotape their own crimes and even release the clip to further dehumanise her? What makes them think they can get away with such heinous crimes (for, clearly, they wouldn't have released the video unless they thought so)?

I felt utterly helpless as I struggled to process the absurdity of the Noakhali case. So I started reading up on the root causes of rape and what makes a criminal go to such lengths. It is generally understood that rape can be addressed through strict laws, provided they are implemented properly—a vital requirement that, unfortunately, remains elusive in Bangladesh. But understanding this crime, and the criminals behind it, is also important in the fight to end the rape culture.

Before we dig into that, it's worthwhile to recall that in almost 975 women were raped in the last 9 months, with 208 of them being gang-raped, according to Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK). Clearly, violence against women and rape has increased during the Covid-19

lockdown. As a society, we should be able to find a solution collectively, and detecting the rapist amongst us is the first step.

Rapists start early

A *New York Times* article, published in 2017 at the height of the #MeToo movement, talked about an interesting approach adopted by Dr Samuel D. Smithyman, a clinical psychologist in South Carolina. For his PhD thesis in 1976, he put up an advert on a newspaper asking rapists to call him, in order to understand "Why men rape". In the end, he conducted 50 interviews of "undetected" rapists. The idea was, unless we understand a criminal's behaviour, it will not be possible to understand the kind of crimes they commit. However, according to the article, rapists start non-consensual sex much early in life. They are also associated with others who share similar opinion regarding violence against women. Rapists who do not feel guilty also tend to be repeat offenders.

While I was reading this article, I was reminded of a Netflix series titled *13 Reasons Why*, which deals with a teenage girl who was raped and eventually killed herself. The perpetrator in question was a rapist who repeatedly committed the crime in school, while his friends remained quiet. Many such boys roam around our girls, and yet we are unaware. It is important to teach our girls how to detect the undetected rapist, through active communication and dialogue. Girls should be able to speak up when they feel uncomfortable, instead of being shamed or silenced.

Rapists feel entitled to harass/abuse women

According to Antonia Abbey, a social psychologist at the Wayne State University in the US city of Detroit, many rapists think that women and girls often play hard to get. They

Numerous movies, both home-grown and imported from Bollywood, show variations of a love story where the hero would "harass" the heroine in broad daylight, accompanied by his dancing troops, and in the end the heroine would fall into his arms. These movies had set in motion a gradual process of acceptance of such behaviours as "harmless".

are seen as sex objects and thus dehumanised. They are also thought of as inferior beings, and men who are rejected by them cannot handle that. As a result, men feel entitled to throw acid in their faces, harass or abuse them as they come from school or other places, sometimes in broad daylight, and even feel entitled to walk into their houses to rape them, etc. Through our tolerance or rather acceptance as a society, we have allowed rape and other forms of abuse and violence against women to be normalised.

Rapists are being enabled

We have had sexual harassment and rape normalised to a point where such incidents

no longer produce shock, unless something jaw-droppingly awful happens, like the Noakhali incident. On any given day, rape for us is just another news item on the back or inside pages of a newspaper. This lack of sensitivity and awareness, among other reasons, is what enables a rapist in the first place. This is what made Delwar Hossain and his Bahini feel they could commit the gruesome crimes with impunity. To be honest, thugs like them have been historically utilised for various crimes, to instil fear into their communities, and they are never arrested or tried until it gets too "embarrassing" for the powers that be.

Many societies and cultures, including ours, have this distorted notion about consent when it comes to love and sex—that women often say no but secretly have no objection. This notion is often promoted in mainstream movies and pornography. Numerous movies, both home-grown and imported from Bollywood, show variations of a love story where the hero would "harass" the heroine in broad daylight, accompanied by his dancing troops, and in the end the heroine would fall into his arms. These movies had set in motion a gradual process of acceptance of such behaviours as "harmless". Think of the 1990 movie *Dil*, where Aamir Khan harasses Madhuri Dixit at night but she eventually falls in love with him! Or think of the 2019 movie *Kabir Singh*, where a hostile medical student literally makes a girl fall in love with him, who remains in love despite being slapped on the face in broad daylight. How can these movies be allowed to be released? And how do they become so popular if we are not endorsing them or the behaviour promoted in them?

Rapists have mental disorder

In 2017, Dr Shuvendu Sen, Associate

Program Director, Internal Medicine Residency, Raritan Bay Medical Center, explained the characteristics of a rapist in the *Times of India*. One of them is mental disorder, which can happen during childhood and in adolescent years. Detecting such behaviour early on is vital, as is treating it through behavioural counselling, psychosocial support and allied therapies. We need to cure these minds before they get damaged beyond repair. This would mean undertaking a concerted effort including forming a better education system (teaching students the harmful effects of patriarchy), having healthier communities as well as empathy from religious leaders, corporate offices and community organisations that will work together with the law enforcers so that potential rapists are identified, before they commit such crimes.

To conclude, these are but some of the many causes and characteristics responsible for our enduring rape culture. There are legal, procedural, political and even societal reasons for why such incidents are on the rise. We need to identify them and prepare accordingly. For a wider impact, we need to instigate systematic changes through the involvement of our homes, communities, educational institutions, faith leaders, NGOs, and above all, the administration. Today, the problem is so profound and widespread that ordinary people sometimes feel helpless and don't know where to begin. As I write this, people are demonstrating and protesting across the country against the rise in sexual crimes. People are now more aware than before, more vocal and united in their demand to end the rape culture. This gives me hope, but is hope enough?

Tasmiah T. Rahiman is in-charge, Skills Development Programme at BRAC, and an advocate of women's rights. Views expressed in the article are her own.

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY



OCTOBER 15, 1959
Final conference on Antarctic Treaty

On this day in 1959 a final conference on the Antarctic Treaty convened in Washington, DC, and, after six weeks of negotiations, the treaty was signed by 12 countries, preserving the continent for free scientific study.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ACROSS | 31 Total | 8 Devoured |
| 1 Dwindled | 32 Battleship | 9 take the title |
| 6 Melts | 33 Canadian letters | 10 Lawn material |
| 11 Full of energy | 34 Canadian capital | 16 Give for a bit |
| 12 Math companion | 35 Stand-in | 17 Stockpile |
| 13 News summary | 38 Colors | 18 Biathlon need |
| 14 Without break | 41 Crupde dwelling | 20 European nation |
| 15 Not digital | 42 "Cats" poet | 21 Writer Nin |
| 17 Timetable abbr. | 43 Nonsensical | 22 Cars' scars |
| 19 Chop off | 44 Sordid | 24 That lass |
| 20 Young fellow | DOWN | 25 Compass dir. |
| 23 Foreboding atmosphere | 1 Fighting | 27 Pen group |
| 25 Trig function | 2 Brewed beverage | 31 Panache |
| 26 Asian nation | 3 Central American nation | 33 Plow team |
| 28 Turn | 4 Writer Hunter | 34 Devious trick |
| 29 Kind of musical wonder | 5 "Scarface" director | 35 Letter after upsilon |
| 30 Mermaid's home | 6 Scout unit | 36 Hary's friend |
| | 7 Put up | 37 Eggs, to Caesar |
| | | 39 Cruise of film |
| | | 40 Messy room |



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

L I M B O S T A R
A V A I L P H O N E
T O R T E R I D G E
I R I S R O N A L D
S I T C O D Y E S
H E A D E D U P
S L U R C O A T
C A P B B S D E E
A B H O R S W E S T
D I A N A P A N D A
E D S E L T I D A L
T E E S S T A Y S

BEETLE BAILEY

BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



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

GRAPE VINE

THREE YEARS LATER



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

After a long hiatus of three years, actor Nipun is back for the big screen with a new film. She started shooting for Saidul Islam Rana's *Biroto*, where she will be sharing the screen with television actor Ahsan Habib Nasim. Actor Nipun was last seen in the film *Dhushor Kuasha* which was released in 2017. Regarding the film, Nipun said, "I really liked the story of the film which is why I decided to take this project. The character that I will play is very good. During the shooting I felt that the whole team is also really good and organised. I hope audience will appreciate the hard work and enjoy the film."



PHOTO: BISHWORANG, ANIK CHANDA

Mother daughter duo

Popular singer Nancy recently shared few snaps from a Puja special photoshoot for the fashion house 'Bishworang' on her verified Facebook page. The photos show Nancy and her daughter Rodela adorned in Puja attire. In one of the photos, the ladies wore sarees where their look was inspired from Rabindranath Tagore's Thakurbari women. The mother-daughter had a good time during their photoshoot, and their lovable bond can be seen beautifully portrayed in the photos. Rodela is twelve years old, studying in seventh grade. Just like her mother, she also has keen interest towards music. She likes painting, dancing, sports and so on.

PRAISED BHABNA

Ashna Habib Bhabna starred short film, *Mukh Asman*, directed by Animesh Aich, was recently released on the online streaming platform *Binge*. She played the role of a frontline doctor. Bhabna has been receiving positive responses for her acting in the film. She said, "I worked really hard for this character. I tried to embody the role in a way that the audience could connect and dive into the story. I always try to feel the characters and work accordingly."



COVER STORY

Hopeful Roshan

Ziaul Roshan first came into the film industry through the Dhaka and Kolkata joint-venture film, 'Rokto'. Since then, he has gone on to star in hit films, like 'Beporowa', 'Dhatteriki' and 'Cockpit', among others. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, he talks about his start in the film industry, and his thoughts on where it is headed.



Rafi Hossain: Welcome to *Uncensored* with Rafi Hossain. Today, we are joined by Roshan. Roshan, how are you spending your time nowadays?

Ziaul Roshan: Similar to a lot of people, this lockdown has been difficult for me. I had a lot of movies which were going to be released, but due to the cinema halls being shut, the releases are at halt. However, since a lot of people faced problems in these challenging times, I should not just focus on my own problems and stay down about it. As things are slowly returning to normal, I am happy that I have been able to start working again. I did the shooting for the video of the title song from the movie, *Ostad*. I also started on a new movie, *Ashirbad*, which is receiving a grant from the government. I feel very grateful to be able to return to shooting.

Rafi: Even though the industry is in this state of crisis, you still have managed to get so many roles. So is our industry really in a state of decline?

Roshan: I consider myself to be very fortunate to have received so many roles. I keep on hearing how our industry is in a state of decline, but I know that our producers are very enthusiastic about bringing out new projects. The people in this industry who love movies will always keep on making movies. Even during this lockdown, I got offers. This shows how eager people are to work.

Rafi: How did your love for doing movies begin?

Roshan: I never thought that I would get to become an actor. I could not ever have imagined coming this far. When I first started, I thought that I would decide if I wanted to continue acting based on how much the audience accepted me. To my surprise, I got so much appreciation after my first film. After that, I started to love doing films. I tried to improve myself with each role I did, so it got very challenging for me at one point. But, I hope that I will be able to develop myself into a top actor that people will watch.

Rafi: How did you get the offer for your first film?

Roshan: The first time I got an offer for a film was when I got the offer to do a film by Sohel Arman bhai. While preparing for that, I got an offer for a film by Anonno Mamun bhai. Soon, I had gotten a few more offers in the span of a few months. That made me very confident, and I thought that I can do even better films. Then one day, Aziz bhai from

JAAZ Multimedia saw me on Facebook and asked me what my height is. After I told him that I was 6'2, he was impressed and told me to come to the office one day. When I went there, I saw Aziz bhai and Zakir Hossain Raju sir sitting there alongside a few other people. JAAZ was also working with SK Movies, so their chairman was also present via video call. Once I entered, they took a short interview of me, and they thought that I could play the role, even though I had never done a film before. I then signed the contract for the film *Rokto* on that day.

Rafi: Nowadays, audiences can see films from all over the world thanks to streaming services like Netflix. How do you think our industry will cope when our audiences

movies. If they did not, then our industry would not be here right now. I think that in the future, we will have much better Bangla films, and if more cinema halls are created, people will start going to watch movies in halls more regularly. Even pre-lockdown, when you went to movie theatres, you would see that a lot of people had gone to watch Bangla movies. If you create more venues for watching movies, then definitely more viewers would show up. People want to watch good movies, so we have to provide them with it.

Rafi: If you got the chance to produce a film, what kind of movie would you make?

Roshan: I would make a very unique movie that relies a lot on the storyline. I would play a character that is very different, with a new look, and it would be something that people would not expect me to play. There are a lot of amazing directors in Bangladesh, like Mostofa Sarwar Farooki sir and Giasuddin Selim sir, among many others. I have not had the pleasure to work with them yet, but I really want to. I want to make a movie where I can showcase my acting abilities properly. I dream that one day, I will be able to make something like that.

Rafi: Tell me five of your virtues and five of your vices.

Roshan: Let me start by saying my own virtues. Firstly, I have a forgiving nature. Even if someone close to me does something bad, it will not ruin my relationship with them. Another thing is that I try to not bother others. Even in movie sets, I try not to bother others by doing things. I also do not like smoking and have no addictions. I would say that my love for movies is a very good habit of mine, and also that I recently started reading books regularly. But, a very important virtue of mine is that I am very family-oriented. I always try to take care of my parents. Another thing, even after I became famous, I made sure not to cut ties with my school friends. I reached out to everyone and now, I have an amazing relationship with them. I do have my vices; I am extremely indecisive. I have a very hard time picking between things. Another bad habit is that I drive my bike recklessly fast. I have got into accidents because of it, and I know that I need to fix that. I also do not maintain my body. I only start taking care of my body whenever I get the offer for a movie. As an actor, I have to maintain myself more. Another very bad habit I have is that whenever I get angry, I become very loud and vocal. I do not get angry often, but when I do, I almost cause a scene. However, I do calm down quickly.

Rafi: Do you have any final messages for the readers?

Roshan: I would request the readers to come watch our movies in theatres whenever they come out. We give our everything for these movies, and our sole reason for that is so that all of you can be entertained. I assure you, a day will come when we all will be proud of Bangladeshi cinemas. I must also warn everyone that there is still a pandemic going on, so we all must be careful. Please make sure to wash your hands regularly, and to sanitise everything. Be careful when dealing with old people or when handling kids.

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub



demand high quality movies like the ones they see other countries making, and where do you think the industry is headed?

Roshan: I cannot say for sure where the industry is headed, but I have faith that it is headed for a bright future. In the past, when we did not have so much access to movies, people would watch any movie that was released in theatres. When I was young, I even remember being excited and going to a neighbour's house with my friends because they had a cassette of a movie. But, nowadays, the situation is very different. Since people can watch films from all over the world, they always want to watch the highest quality movies. But, I have a strong believe that people still love Bangladeshi



POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some binge worthy movie and series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.



Serious Men

Serious Men is an Indian comedy-drama film on Netflix, based on the eponymous book by Manu Joseph. It has been directed by Sudhir Mishra, produced by Sudhir Mishra, Bhavesh Mandalia, and Sejal Shah, with Nawazuddin Siddiqui in the lead. It focuses on a man living in a slum, working as an astronomer's assistant, and the consequences he faces after spreading the rumor that his son is a science-genius. The film was released on October 2, 2020.

Emily in Paris

Emily in Paris is a comedy-drama web television series on Netflix. It has been created by Darren Star, produced by Stephen Joel Brown, alongside others, and stars Lily Collins in the lead. The story follows a young American girl who moves to Paris for her new job, and depicts the cultural clash she faces as she settles into her new lifestyle. It premiered on Netflix on October 2, 2020.



Record of Youth

Record of Youth is a South Korean youth romance television series, available on Netflix. It has been directed by Ahn Gil-ho, produced under the banner of Pan Entertainment, and stars Park Bo-gum, Park So-dam, and Byeon Woo-seok, among others. The story follows three youths trying to make their name in the world of contemporary fashion. It was originally released on September 7, 2020.

Shreya Shomoyeeta

The Haunting of Bly Manor

The Haunting of Bly Manor is a supernatural horror drama web television series on Netflix, which has been loosely based on Henry James novella, *The Turn of the Screw*. It is the second series in *The Haunting* anthology, following *The Haunting of Hill House*. The series has been created by Mike Flanagan, produced by Kathy Gilroy and Leah Fong, and stars Victoria Pedretti, Oliver Jackson-Cohen, and Amelia Eve, among others. It premiered on October 9, 2020.



SPORT

What to WATCH

FACEBOOK LIVE

PRESIDENT'S CUP

Najmul XI v Tamim XI

Live from 1:30pm

SONY SIX ST PETERSBURG OPEN

Live from 4:00pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Bangalore v Punjab

Live from 8:00pm



Neymar scored a hatrick as Brazil thumped Peru 4-2 in a World Cup qualifier on Tuesday. The treble took the 28-year-old to 64 goals for Brazil, past Ronaldo and 13 shy of Pele's all-time record. (Bottom) Meanwhile, Lionel Messi was instrumental as Argentina beat Bolivia 2-1 in La Paz, the Albiceleste's first win away to Bolivia in 15 years, with goals coming from Lautaro Martinez and Joaquin Correa. PHOTO: REUTERS/TWITTER

'Neymar is the bow and arrow'

Argentina conquer La Paz; Uruguay beaten

AGENCIES

Brazil coach Tite hailed Neymar and said the Brazil star was only getting better after the forward moved past Ronaldo on the nation's goalscoring list.

Neymar scored a hatrick as Brazil recorded a hard-fought 4-2 win over Peru in World Cup qualifying on Tuesday. With 64 international goals, he moved past Ronaldo (62), with only Pele (77) having scored more times for Brazil than the 28-year-old.

Tite was full of praise for Neymar, who netted two penalties in the win over a 10-man Peru.

"Each historic moments of the selection, each generation, it has its own values," the Brazil coach told a news conference, via Globo. "It has Ronaldo, extraordinary phenomenon. Rivaldo, Romario, Bebeto, each one in his own moment. It is unfair to make comparisons."

"What I can say is that Neymar has this unpredictability. He is a bow and arrow. He is the player for the assist and the finish too, better and better and with an increasing degree of maturity."

Brazil trailed twice against Peru as Andre Carrillo and Renato Tapia scored, only for their efforts to be cancelled out by Neymar and Richarlison respectively.

Neymar scored another spot-kick in the 83rd minute before sealing the win, and completing his hatrick, in additional time to give Tite's men a second win in as



many qualifiers.

ARGENTINA BREAK BOLIVIA JINX

A late goal from Joaquin Correa helped Argentina come from behind to beat Bolivia 2-1 on Tuesday and maintain their 100 percent record in the South American World Cup qualifiers.

Bolivia took the lead after 24 minutes when captain Marcelo Martins rose unmarked to head home a cross from the left.

However, Argentina, who beat visitors Ecuador 1-0 in their opener last week, equalised seconds before halftime when a clearance from defender Jose Maria Carrasco hit Lautaro Martinez just yards from goal and flew into the net.

Correa then got Argentina's winner with a sweet left-foot strike 11 minutes from the final whistle as Bolivia suffered another defeat following their 5-0 thrashing away to Brazil last week.

The result was Argentina's ninth game unbeaten under coach Lionel Scaloni and their first win in Bolivia since 2005.

It came in spite of their evident troubles with the thin air, with the game being played at high altitude in La Paz, and some of their players took gulps of oxygen at the side of the pitch during a busy second half.

Martinez could have had a hatrick but scooped one chance over the bar and had another well saved by the Bolivian keeper.

"We knew what this game meant to us because of its history," the Inter Milan striker said. "We're not going to deny that it's difficult to play here. I think this team showed lots of heart and lots of brains. We're very happy."

Lionel Messi was another outstanding performer for the visitors, although the Barcelona forward played a deeper role than usual and was more of a creator



than taker of chances.

URUGUAY HAMMERED, FALCAO SALVAGES DRAW

In Ecuador, the home side recovered from that opening day loss to Argentina to hammer Uruguay 4-2.

Luis Suarez got two goals back for Uruguay in the dying minutes, both of them from the spot, to put a more respective sheen on the scoreline.

Meanwhile, Radamel Falcao scored an injury time equaliser as Colombia salvaged a point in a 2-2 draw in Chile.

Gaston Gimenez scored a late winner before goalkeeper Anthony Silva saved a penalty from Yangel Herrera as Paraguay won 1-0 in Venezuela.

The top four sides in the 10-team South American group qualify directly for Qatar 2022 and the fifth-placed side goes into an inter-regional playoff.

Ronaldo 'doing fine', but doubtful for Barca clash

AGENCIES

Portugal boss Fernando Santos says Cristiano Ronaldo is 'doing fine' after testing positive for coronavirus and has not shown any symptoms of the virus.

The 35-year-old Juventus forward was due to face Sweden on Wednesday night in the Uefa Nations League but has been forced to self-isolate in the team hotel after his latest coronavirus test came back positive.

Despite mingling with his teammates for the past week, the rest of the squad have all tested negative and will be allowed to take part in the match against Sweden as planned.

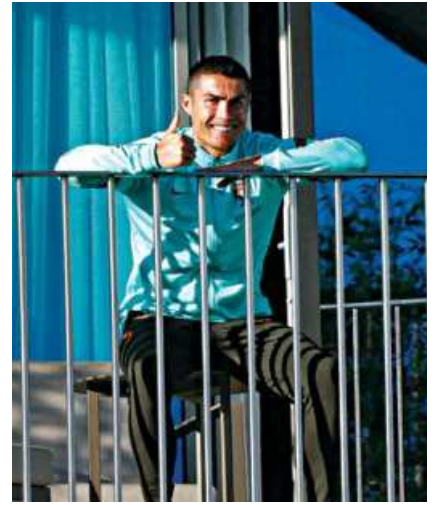
Ronaldo has been able to watch training from his hotel room, even shouting instructions down to the players, and Santos says the former Real Madrid star is disappointed he will not be able to play.

"The plan is the same. But the dynamics are different. Cristiano has his own characteristics. No team can be better without the best player in the world but this team has already demonstrated that collectively it has the capacity to tackle the situation."

"He is managing the situation very well. He is in the room, saying he wants to play, he talks to us from the balcony."

"He is completely asymptomatic, he is okay, he doesn't even know what happened to him."

Juventus defender Giorgio Chiellini



said he had spoken to Ronaldo. "He's fine and was sunbathing, he'll be back when he's ready," he reported.

It is also a blow for Juventus, as the health protocol in force for Serie A says Ronaldo must self-isolate for 10 days and then record a negative test before he can resume playing.

Ronaldo is also in doubt for Juventus's marquee Champions League clash with Barcelona on Oct 28, which was set to pit Ronaldo against his old rival Lionel Messi.

As per UEFA rules, Ronaldo must return a negative test seven days prior to any match, meaning he must return a negative test in the next seven days.



The first two games of the ongoing three-team BCB President's Cup produced low scores, with none of the sides being able to cross the 200-run mark. With the pacers dominating the fifty-over competition, everyone will be looking at the batsmen for a response. Experienced batsman Mushfiqur Rahim, who missed out in the first game after being dismissed for just one, will be eager to make a statement with the bat for his side. Having won the first game, Najmul XI will today take on Tamim XI, who lost their opening game after being bundled out for just 103. PHOTO: STAR

Barca, Real to meet on October 24

AFP, Madrid

The first Clasico of the season, between Barcelona and Real Madrid, will be played on October 24, La Liga said on Tuesday.

The match was originally pencilled in for the 25th, when the majority of games in the seventh round of the Liga season will be played. It will be behind closed doors at the Camp Nou.

Several first team players from both clubs are on international duty with their national outfits.

When they return this week, they will face two fixtures before the Clásico on 24 October.

Real Madrid face Cadiz in the league on Saturday, 17 October, before their opening Champions League game on Wednesday, 21 October against Shakhtar Donetsk.

Barcelona, meanwhile, travel to Madrid to face Getafe on 17 October, before hosting Hungarian outfit Ferencvaros on Tuesday, 20 October.

That means that Ronald Koeman's side will have one day extra to prepare for the all-important Clásico that weekend. Real Madrid currently sit top of the LaLiga table with 10 points after four games while Barcelona are in fifth with seven points.



Djokovic seeks solace at Bosnian pyramids

AFP, Sarajevo

Novak Djokovic visited a Bosnian 'pyramid park' on Tuesday to benefit from the site's purported healing powers and miracle cures, 48 hours after his demolition by Rafael Nadal in the French Open final.

The Serbian world number one is known for unorthodox and sometimes controversial new-age spiritual views and practices.

And two days after being swept aside 6-0, 6-2, 7-5 at Roland Garros he made a trip to Visko's Valley of the Pyramids and its 25,000-year-old tunnels beneath whose "energy" is claimed to bring about miracle cures.

Although some hills in the region resemble a pyramid shape, the European Association of Archaeologists debunked the claims as pseudo-science over a decade ago.

"I would invite all athletes to come here to spend time in the tunnels, which are very beneficial for the increase of oxygen in the lungs," he told public TV station FTV.

"It has a direct effect on regeneration, on recovery, which is very important for athletes," he said.

According to local media, visitors to the pyramid park have increased since Djokovic's earlier visit in July after he and his wife contracted Covid-19 following a tennis tournament Djokovic organised in the Balkans.

"If there is paradise on earth, then it is here," the Serbian player said at the time.

Two shooters to see action in online competition

SPORTS REPORTER

While the world's top shooters transformed their living rooms into makeshift ranges and participated in newly-

fashioned online competitions in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic in late April, Bangladeshi shooters sat idle due to an internal conflict between the Bangladesh Shooting Sports Federation (BSSF) president and secretary general.

The online competitions, conceptualised by former Indian rifle shooter Shimon Sharif, kept international shooters in business, making the sport a rarity as other disciplines had shut shop.

Now, two Bangladesh shooters are set to gather that experience for the first time on October 17, thanks to the BSSF ad-hoc committee, which arranged an online shooting

competition named after Sheikh Russel. Seven countries -- India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Bangladesh -- will participate.

Two shooters -- one male and one female -- from each country will take part in 10m Air Rifle events separately. They will perform in the physical presence of one jury member and their performance will be monitored online through cameras. There will not be a final round; instead, the qualification round consisting of 60 shots will be considered the final round.

"Any participant can use his personal range but he/she must be accompanied by an ISSF jury member, who will send the scores for compilation as the whole competition will be monitored," said BSSF member Mustaque Waise, adding that Bangladeshi shooters

would use the Gulshan Shooting Complex range.

"We have arranged this tournament to mark the birthday of Sheikh Russel. Besides, such online competitions are happening all over the world. The new committee is trying to bring something new in shooting in a bid to make it functional as the shooters have been out of action for a long period," said Waise, also a former BSSF chief operating officer.

While most local shooters are still out of action, Abdullah Hel Baki, Risalatul Islam, Syeda Atkia Hasan Disha, Ummek Jazia Sultana Tumpa -- returned to training last month to ensure their Tokyo scholarships from the Olympic committee. Two of them will represent Bangladesh after going through three competitions for selection.

So far, Baki and Tumpa are ahead

of Risalatul and Disha at the end of the second competition held on Thursday. The final round will take place on Saturday, just a day before the start of the online competition.

"Today Baki scored better (624.9) than he did in his first competition (622.3) while Tumpa has done better than Disha in the first two competitions. Everything will be finalised on Saturday," said coach Golam Shafuiddin Khan. "As they were out of action for a long time, they are now having trouble with the triggers of rifles. They need time to return to their normal performance."

Shafuiddin believes participating in the online competition will be a new experience for the shooters and that they will also develop the requisite temperament for competitions through those experiences.



Despite enjoying only 28 percent possession, Ukraine managed to beat Spain, thanks to a 76th minute strike from Viktor Tsyhankov. The UEFA Nations League fixture held at the Olympic Stadium in Kiev in front of a large crowd on Tuesday night was the first win for Andriy Shevchenko's men over Spain. PHOTO: REUTERS

Dhoni slammed

AFP, Dubai

Cricket fans have slammed Mahendra Singh Dhoni for apparently bullying umpire Paul Reiffel into changing a wide call during an Indian Premier League game.

The incident occurred Tuesday when Chennai Super Kings paceman Shardul Thakur bowled outside the off stump of Sunrisers Hyderabad batsman Rashid Khan.

Umpire Reiffel appeared to start the signal for a wide when Dhoni began protesting. Reiffel then seemed to change his mind midway through the signal and the ball went down as legitimate in the crucial penultimate over of Hyderabad's unsuccessful chase of 168.

Ian Bishop said on ESPNcricinfo that Reiffel had erred. "He started calling it a wide, he looked up, saw Dhoni and he changed his mind," Bishop said. "I am someone who is sympathetic to the umpires because it is a difficult job, but tonight I will say that Reiffel made a mistake."

Hyderabad captain David Warner was visibly unhappy in the dugout and Dhoni was slammed on social media. Others criticised Reiffel for bowing to pressure.



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

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



GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM

SHAH CEMENT

AMPHETAMINE SMUGGLING

Bangladesh being used as a route

Transnational syndicate using Dhaka airport, int'l courier services, says narcotics dept probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A transnational syndicate is allegedly using Bangladesh as a route to smuggle amphetamine powder to other countries after smuggling it into the country from neighbouring India.

It is using Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) and international courier services to get the powder out of the country.

The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) came up with the findings while investigating a case filed after the recovery of 12.32kg of amphetamine powder from the cargo village area of HSIA last month.

To detect such smuggling consignments and increase vigilance, the DNC is now planning to deploy a dog squad at the airport.

The DNC also instructed international delivery service providers to install scanning machines at their offices so that no one can send such illegal goods through them.

Bangladesh banned the import of amphetamine and its use for production of medicine for cold in February 2017 after it was found that the chemical was largely used for yaba production.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Three rickshaw passengers using a tarp to shield against the driving rain on the Dhaka University campus yesterday afternoon. While they are shielded from the rain, the absence of masks in the close confines under the tarp puts them at risk of coronavirus transmission.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

US ELECTION



Trump, Biden set to face off on TV

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump will feature in a televised town hall on NBC News today, the network said, setting up a direct scheduling clash with rival Joe Biden who had already planned his own version.

The two were originally meant to have been meeting for their second debate this evening. Instead, they will be simultaneously, but separately, talking to voters in TV studios -- NBC for Trump and ABC for Biden.

Trump will be in Miami, the network said, while Biden, who had already booked his appearance last week, will be in Philadelphia.

Their scheduled debate had also been designed as a town hall where the two candidates would have fielded questions from voters, but this was upended after Trump contracted the coronavirus.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

RAPE CASE IN KHULNA

HC upholds life term based on circumstances

Punishment stays though medical report unavailable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has upheld the life sentence handed to a convict in a rape case in Khulna, considering the circumstances and statement of the victim although her medical report was not available.

"The appellate court [HC] has upheld the sentence handed down by the lower court concerned as the statement of the victim about the rape was believable. Therefore, the appellant [Ibrahim Gazi] cannot be acquitted [of the charges] on the excuse that her medical test was not done or he [Ibrahim] has not raped," the HC said.

The HC bench of Justice Md Rezaul Haque and Justice Bishmadedev Chakraborty made the observation in the full text of the verdict, which was released yesterday.

The bench delivered the short verdict on February 27 on the appeal filed by Ibrahim challenging the trial court judgment on him in the rape case.

Deputy Attorney General Jannatul

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangabandhu's cable to ICRC president



Members of Bangladesh Chattra League National Executive Committee garlanding Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on October 15, 1972 in celebration of his being awarded the Joliot-Curie Medal for peace by the World Peace Council.

October 15, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

SPEEDY REPATRIATION OF BANGALEES URGED

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman urges the president of the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) Geneva to urgently take up the issue of stranded Bangalees with the authorities in Islamabad to prevent their persecution and arrange their speedy repatriation to Bangladesh. The prime minister today in a telegraphic message to Marcel Naville portrays the plights of the Bangalees stranded in Pakistan.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

LIBELLOUS FB COMMENT

Former Ducus VP Nur sued under Digital Security Act

STAR REPORT

A Dhaka University student yesterday sued former Ducus vice-president Nurul Haque Nur under the Digital Security Act over making insulting and defamatory comments about her during a Facebook Live broadcast.

Earlier, the student had filed three more cases against Nur over her alleged rape.

In the Facebook Live aired on Sunday night, Nur said the DU student, now in a hunger strike until death, was staging a drama and called her "dushcharitraheem".

Yesterday, the student filed the case with the Cyber Tribunal in Dhaka. Shamim Al Mamun, bench assistant of the tribunal, told The Daily Star.

Judge Mohammad Ash Sams Joglul Hossain took

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Peru opens Machu Picchu for a single Japanese tourist



AFP, Lima

Peru's best-known tourist site Machu Picchu has opened after months of coronavirus closure, but for just a single visitor -- a Japanese man stranded in the country by the pandemic.

"The first person on Earth who went to Machu Picchu since the lockdown is meeeeeee," Jesse Katayama posted on his Instagram account alongside pictures of himself at the deserted site.

"This is truly amazing! Thank you," he added in a video posted on the Facebook pages of the local tourism authority in Cusco, where the famed site is located.

Katayama spoke against the backdrop of the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Ninth-grader gang-raped in Cox's Bazar

Three rapists held

STAR REPORT

A grade-IX student has allegedly been gang-raped in Moheshkhali upazila of Cox's Bazar.

Nurul Hakim, of the upazila's Gulgulia Para, called the girl over phone and asked her to meet him on October 11. As the girl responded, Nurul and his two friends -- Ebadullah and Khairul Amin -- took her to a nearby paddy field and gang-raped her, said police.

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PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 15

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

Panic grips locals after Rangamati gunfight

STAR REPORT

Panic gripped Rangamati's Naniarchar after a gunfight took place in the area on Tuesday evening.

Additional members of police and army have been deployed there, said Md Sabbir Rahman, officer-in-charge of Naniarchar police station.

In a press release, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said two members of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF-Prasit Khisa) were killed and a member of Bangladesh Army was injured in the gunfight.

The deceased were identified as Ashapurna Chakma alias Rocket and Shambu Chakma, said police.

The OC said Ashapurna was a member of the UPDF, but they were yet to know whether Shambu was involved in any politics.

"We are trying to find out whether Shambu was a member of the UPDF or

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Two indigenous women returning home with bundles full of chopped wood, to be used as fuel, in Rangamati's Katchhari area.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

RURAL INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Their hard labour goes unrecognised

NILIMA JAHAN

Mayadebi Tanchangya, of Bilaichhari upazila, toils away every morning till night to make ends meet for her seven-member family.

From domestic work and rearing livestock to farming vegetables on a small field in her homestead and jhum, the 48-year-old works for hours every day for only Tk 15,000 a month, which she spends on her family.

When the pandemic-induced shutdown had begun, she started facing problems while selling her farm-grown vegetable. As she is not registered as a female farmer and has no state support, she is still facing difficulty due to Covid-19's impact.

On top of this, she did not know that the government is providing under a Tk 5,000 crore stimulus package to small and medium farmers in rural areas.

"I don't know anything about it. I heard this from you," Mayadebi told this correspondent.

Mayadebi is among the hundreds of indigenous women, living in hilly districts and on plain land, who hardly get any recognition despite making important contributions to the country's society, agriculture and subsistence economy.

An overwhelming majority of them are kept out of the loop in terms of any state support, such as agricultural cards, seeds, fertilizers, or low-interest loans.

The Daily Star spoke to 15 indigenous women from the three hill tracts districts and plain land, but none of them have been registered as farmers in the digital database of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE).

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