



Your Right to Know



## Anti-rape march attacked in Feni

35 hurt as AL MP Nizam Hazari's followers attack protesters; they allege police joined in

The long march by anti-rape protesters from Dhaka to Noakhali came under repeated attacks in Feni yesterday after men of the ruling Awami League and police allegedly carried out "joint attacks" on them, leaving at least 35 protesters injured.

The incidents happened at the Shanti Company intersection in Feni town around 11:30am after the demonstrators concluded a rally in the Feni Shaheed Minar area.

Goons of the local Awami League launched attacks on us with sticks and rods. At first, police were mere spectators. Then they too joined the ruling-party men and chased us... When we got on the bus, they attacked us again, hurling brick chunks, charging with sticks and ransacking the buses," Mehedi Hasan Nobel, president of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, told reporters in Chowmuhani of Noakhali.

"In the two-hour journey from Feni to Noakhali, we saw Chhatra League and Jubo League men take up positions on the sides of the road. Fearing for their security, police did not arrange any treatment for us and so the injured had to remain in the bus," Mehedi said, adding that they SEE PAGE 2 COL 2 PHOTOS ON PAGE 2

## VACCINE CANDIDATES WHO includes three made by Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three Covid-19 vaccine candidates developed by the Bangladeshi vaccine company Globe Biotech Ltd have been included in the draft landscape of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

With this, Globe Biotech Ltd has entered the global race for a Covid-19 vaccine as a first-ever Bangladeshi company.

This, however, doesn't guarantee the vaccine's effectiveness or success, experts

"This is a good progress, but this does not mean these vaccines are successful. There is a long way to go", Prof Sayedur Rahman, chairman of pharmacology at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), told The Daily Star

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Custodial Death, Torture Victims

## Ensure enough compensation

Speakers at webinar urge the govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is not enough that victims of custodial torture and deaths be allowed to seek criminal accountability, they also have to be allowed to seek monetary compensation and there have to be mechanisms that enable it.

While the courts can grant monetary compensation, the victims or their families are still not allowed to voluntarily seek it.

However, there is a cap on how much compensation can be given by the courts, which deters victims from pursuing justice, speakers observed at a webinar titled "Accountability for Custodial Torture: Lessons from the landmark Jonny Case", organised jointly by The Daily Star, Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust and Tort Law Project Bangladesh yesterday

"My dead brother left behind two children. I have spent all of my savings pursuing justice and I don't know what lies ahead in the future of these two children. Who will take their financial responsibility?" said Imtiaz Hossain Rocky, who was tortured by police in 2014 and lost his brother Jonny during the same incident.

Rocky filed a case against the police and received a verdict on September 9, wherein three cops were given life sentence and fined Tk 2 lakh each to be given to the victims' family. The fine, however, will not be handed SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Universities to hold tests for admission

Decides a VC meet

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Vice-chancellors of public universities yesterday decided in principle that admission tests for freshers would be held.

After attending a virtual meeting of Bangladesh Bishwabidyalaya Parishad, an association of public university vicechancellors, they, however, said the date and the method of the exams would be announced later.

"We have decided that admission tests for enrolling students at universities will take place. But it was not decided how the test will be held; whether it will be held in-person or online," Prof Mohammad Rafiqul Alam, VC of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology, told The

Rafiqul and Chittagong University SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Bangladesh asked to be in clinical trials

Says Modi regarding Indian vaccine candidates

UNB, Dhaka

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said there are requests from Bangladesh, Myanmar, Qatar and Bhutan for clinical trials of Covid-19 vaccine.

Indian scientists and research teams are collaborating and strengthening research capacities in neighbouring countries -- Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Mauritius, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives

Three vaccines are at the advanced stages of development in India and two of them are in Phase-II and one is in Phase-III.

In an effort to help the global community, Modi directed that they should not limit their efforts to their immediate neighbourhood but also reach out to the entire world in providing vaccines, medicines and IT platforms for the vaccine delivery system.

Modi was reviewing the Covid-19 pandemic situation in his country and the preparedness of vaccine delivery, distribution, and administration, according to the Press Information Bureau of India. SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



The by-polls in Dhaka-5 and Naogaon-6 constituencies recorded a noticeably low voter turnout. In the photo, one polling booth at Bornomala High School and College in Dhaka recorded zero vote till 1:03pm. Awami League candidates Kazi Monirul Islam and Anwar Hossain won in their respective constituencies. Story on page 5. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

We're hopeful of preventing further Covid spread: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina vesterday said Bangladesh will be able to prevent the further spread of the Covid-19 in the coming days.

'So far, we're lucky that both the infection and mortality rates of the disease are very low in Bangladesh. We're hopeful that we'll be able to prevent the

further spread of the disease in the coming days," she said. The PM said this in her pre-recorded video message played at the First International e-Conference on Critical

Care-2020. Bangladesh Society of Anesthesiologists organised it virtually. She said united efforts and the hard-labour of physicians

and health workers can contain the spread of the deadly virus in Bangladesh.

To face the Covid-19 emergency, she said the government has appointed 2,000 doctors and 5,000 nurses on an

The PM said the conference is being held at a time when the world is reeling under the Covid-19 pandemic fallout. She mentioned that the anesthesiologists play a crucial role in the management of critically ill patients apart from

their work in operation theatres. "Our anesthesiologists have been doing a wonderful job

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



City





3,02,298



VACCINE PROCUREMENT

## Govt seeks \$500 million from Japan

JAGARAN Chakma

The government has sought financial support of \$500 million from Japan for the procurement of Covid-19

The Economic Relations Division (ERD) yesterday sent a letter to Embassy of Japan in Dhaka in this

The letter was sent as per the demand of the health ministry, which informed the ERD about the estimated cost of vaccine procurement and to seek necessary funds from development partners.

A senior ERD official said a meeting was held to categorise potential development partners to seek funds from.

He said they have already contacted different partners informing them about Bangladesh's need for funds, adding that they will also seek funds from Asian Development Bank and World Bank.

The ERD wrote that to bring the entire population under the coverage of vaccination, it is estimated that if each person needs two doses of vaccine that costs \$10-12 per person, the cost for covering a population of 165 million will be around \$ 1.65

billion to \$2 billion. The letter to the Embassy of Japan read that under the circumstances stated above, the government of Bangladesh would like to request the Government of Japan to provide \$500 million as assistance for the

procurement of vaccines. Meanwhile, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Bangladesh government signed an agreement for a \$3 million grant for the procurement of urgent medical

Besides, the ERD will seek an extra \$350 million from ADB to purchase

Similarly, ERD will also seek financial support of around \$1 billion from World Bank.

According to ERD letter sent to development partners, the Covid-19 is taking its toll on human lives and economies globally and is showing no sign of respite any time soon.

So, it is imperative to restrain the outbreak of the novel coronavirus for protecting both the lives of people and the economy, the letter read.

The financial support is being sought as the vaccine will likely be available in the market within a short

A large-scale commercial production of the vaccine is expected by the end of this year. In this context, a major initiative has been initiated to import vaccines into Bangladesh in order to make it available for all the citizens.

#### Ensure enough

FROM PAGE 1

over to the family until the verdict is upheld by the highest courts of the country, where the accused will be

"They have only overcome the first step of the legal process, the High Court comes next, followed by the Appellate Division. The Tk 4 lakh they will be getting once the process is over is not enough to raise the two children," observed Sara Hossain, executive director of Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust, at the webinar

"The penalty for torture is only a maximum of Tk 25,000 if there is no manslaughter and Tk 2 lakh if the victim died. If there was not a maximum limit, we would have been able to get more people interested in justice," said Tagbir Huda, coordinato of Tort Law Project Bangladesh.

"People have lost faith in the law enforcement and are also losing faith in the judiciary, thinking that if they seek justice, it will take 10 to 12 years. Those of us who are in this sector have never reflected on ourselves to find out why this is so," said Dr Shahdeen Malik, eminent jurist and Supreme Court lawyer.

There is legal precedent for creating a compensation fund, speakers said.

"In 2012, I had challenged the immunity given to the crimes caused by Operation Clean Heart. At least 57 people had died due to torture between January and October 2002 and it could not be that in a country where there is a constitution, there would be no accountability for their deaths. In 2015, we got a verdict and the judge had directed the governmen to create a compensation fund of Tk 100 crore," said Dr Malik

Such a mechanism for justice is necessary because of the prevalence of custodial torture, speakers observed.

"For any and all cases, judges these days allow the law enforcers to take the accused into remand and we appreciate this, thinking that a confessional statement can be forcefully acquired from the person. This is unconstitutional -- the constitution clearly states that no person can be forced to give a self-incriminating confessional," said Dr Malik.

















US polls results

won't impact its

ties with Dhaka Say experts

Bss, Dhaka

As the US awaits the crucial presidential elections, analysts predict the outcome was unlikely to affect the existing Dhaka-Washington relations despite speculations about the polls impact on US ties with some other nations.

US Deputy Secretary of State Stephen E Biegun has just concluded a threeday Dhaka tour when he indicated that his country treats Bangladesh as a "centerpiece" in South Asia, a position which was unlikely to be changed whoever takes the Whitehouse Republicans or Demarcates.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said the US set outline of its relations with Dhaka under a "well plotted strategy". Past instances suggested that the change of administration after presidential elections there make no rapid change in US foreign policy.

"Whoever comes [to power in US] hopefully will follow the same policy [towards Bangladesh]," he said after a meeting with Biegun on Thursday adding that Bangladesh's robust economic growth and stability alongside its geopolitical location drew the US interest towards Dhaka.

But, he said, Bangladesh counts US interest.

International relations analyst Professor Lailufar Yasmin of Dhaka University echoed Momen saying "US policy towards Bangladesh whether it is under Trump administration or Obama administration didn't change".

"Now they [US] took IPS [Indo Pacific Strategy] but there was no change in Bangladesh's geopolitical strategic significance," she told BSS. She pointed out that in his election

campaign President Donald Trump's rival Joe Biden is also speaking against China in line with his party's foreign

International affairs Prof Imtiaz Ahmed, however, said Bangladesh should not take any major decision regarding ties with the United States ahead of the polls as the "Trump administration's foreign policy is insular and promoting deglobalization". Biegun arrived here just less than

three weeks before the US polls while the democratic candidate Joe Biden is leading Donald Trump in the national polls for the presidential election. Ahmed speculated that the senior

US official's visit could be part of Trump's election campaign to show the US voters that the Republicans were very confident to stage a comeback and being engaged in geopolitics against China.

He said huge numbers of Indian and Bangladeshi origin USA diaspora voters could be another reason for Biegun's selection of New Delhi and Dhaka for the visit just two weeks before the polls.

During his Dhaka visit Biegun joined an interaction with a select group of journalists including BSS diplomatic correspondent, he said the current Bangladesh-US relation was in a "very good shape" and the existing ties offered scopes to deepen it.

But the senior US state department official said relations of his country with Bangladesh was mainly based on investment and trade cooperation and this "positive engagement of the USA n Bangladesh is nothing to do about it [the geo politics]". He said a recent bilateral economic dialogue suggested measures to develop an economic roadmap while there were numbers of factors including Dhaka's growth and sustained stability that drive the

Biegun had acknowledged that there are a number of challenges and tensions in the region that have alarmed the US and other countries in the Indo-Pacific".







## Anti-rape march attacked in Feni

finally received primary treatment at Life Care Hospital in Chowmuhani.

At least 35 activists got primary treatment from the hospital, said Rakib Uddin, a physician at the hospital. Eight to 10 of them suffered severe blows and were later treated at Noakhali General

Photos and videos of the attack went viral on social media as heavy criticism poured in from netizens. In the videos, it was seen that police were mere spectators when attackers swooped and made no attempt to detain them.

The protesters alleged that plainclothes men in DB jackets also took part in the attack.

The attack came on the day when Bangladesh Police organised anti-rape and anti-violence rallies in 6,912 beats across the country to create public awareness against rape and violence against women.

Denying the allegations, Additional Superintendent of Feni Police Mainul Islam told The Daily Star that it was "not an attack", but a scuffle broke out there after the rally.

"Marchers wrote 'Dhorshokder Paharadar' [protecters of rapists], 'Tui Dhorshok' [you are a rapist], on posters of local lawmaker Nizam Uddin Hazari.

In protest, his followers brought out a procession. Activists from the long march chased followers of the lawmaker and a scuffle ensued," he claimed.

League men and police allegedly jointly attacked them repeatedly in the district. The attack drew massive public criticism on social media.

The official said police tried to restrain the ruling party men and did

not attack the marchers.

The Daily Star called AL lawmaker Nizam Hazari for comments, but he did

not answer the phone. Feni Sadar upazila AL General Secretary Sushen Chandra Shil denied AL's involvement.

"The general public were angered and reacted after seeing derogatory comments on the placards of Nizam Hazari, which also included a photo of the prime minister. No one from Awami League and its affiliates were involved," he told reporters.

Hriddĥo cultural Anindya, affairs secretary of Chhatra Union's Jahangirnagar University unit, who was at the march, alleged that police first attacked them when some protesters were painting a wall in the Feni Shaheed "Later, when we tried to move

towards the bus, some miscreants entered the procession and attacked us. They ransacked our six buses," he said. Demonstrators said they cancelled their rally in Dagonbhuiyan upazila

after learning that the ruling party men also attacked local leftist protesters there.

The long marchers finally held a concluding rally at Maizdi Shaheed Minar of Noakhali around 4:00pm. They demanded immediate resignation of the home minister.

Later, they announced protest rallies across the country on October 19. If their nine-point demand is not met, they warned of a highway blockade across the country on October 21. Tougher protests will come if the home minister did not resign, they said.

In a press statement, Bangladesh Chhatra Ûnion said such attacks in Feni clarified the position of the government

and the police, in favour of the rapists.

Protesting the attacks in Feni, several left-leaning parties brought out processions and protest rallies in several parts of the country, including Dhaka. They demanded arrest of the Feni attackers and resignation of the "failed" home minister.

Protests against rape and violence against women erupted across the country since the beginning of October, following the recent incidents of gang rape in Sylhet's MC College and in Noakhali's Begumganj upazila.

Around 450 protesters, including left-leaning parties, socio-cultural

rights activists, started the long march under the banner "Bangladesh against Rape and Impunity" to press home their nine-point demand, from the capital's Shahbagh area around 10:30am on Friday.

Their nine-point demand includes reformation of the Evidence Act,

ogranisations, students, youths and

implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Against charter, Discrimination (CEDAW) exemplary punishment for those involved in gender-based violence, and an end to repression of women in the hills and on plain land. Meanwhile, various political,

labour and social parties and organisations organised human chains, demonstrations and protest processions in front of the National Press Club in the capital against rape and torture of women and children in the country. Speakers at these programmes said

the incidence of rape and oppression of women and children is increasing due to the culture of impunity in the country. For the same reason, incidents like murder, kidnapping, and extrajudicial killings are also increasing,

#### We're hopeful of preventing further Covid spread: PM The PM paid deep homage to their couple of years. The private sector has emergency medicine, and pain

during this pandemic managing the Covid-19 patients in ICUs and outside. Bangladesh Society of Anesthesiologists helped the government prepare the National Guideline for Covid ICU Management.'

Hasina said they also arranged new ICU facilities all over the country and trained up ICU doctors and staffers to deal with Covid-19 patients.

She said a good number of physicians, including some anesthesiologists, died from coronavirus infections while discharging their duties.

memories and expressed sympathies for their family members.

Hasina said the government has given utmost importance towards improving the country's healthcare service. "We truly believe that getting healthcare is the basic rights of a citizen. So, we've widened the treatment facilities at government hospitals by adding additional beds, recruiting

doctors and other health staffers." She mentioned that the government has set up a number of new specialised hospitals in the country in the last intensive

also come up in a big way in this area. The PM said about 18,000

community clinics and union health centres set up by the government have been providing primary healthcare services to rural people. Patients are getting 30 types of free medicine.

The PM said anaesthesiology, a medical speciality concerned with the

total perioperative care of patients before, during and after surgery, is getting increased attention everywhere.

"This is because it covers anaesthesia, care medicine,

medicine. Bangladesh is no exception. We duly recognise their contributions. She urged them to equip themselves

with updated knowledge and the technical know-how to handle the critically ill patients. Hasina said the job of a physician

is a noble profession. By treating an ailing human being, the physicians serve humanity. "So, when anyone becomes a doctor, that person's first and foremost task is to serve humanity. I hope you won't forget your duty under any circumstances.

## WHO includes three made by Bangladesh

Earlier on October 5, Kakan Nag, CEO of the Globe Biotech Ltd, alleged that the WHO is "delaying the enlistment unnecessarily".

Rana, Bardan Jung country representative of WHO, told The Daily Star, "Coming into the landscape doesn't mean anything; it doesn't mean okay... There are lot of things [after

He also said there was no delay but the headquarters had been reviewing the documents.

On October 5, Globe Biotech announced that its first vaccine candidate, which is developed based on D614G variant mRNA vaccine, had passed in the pre-clinical trial on mice and was ready for a clinical trial.

It has not disclosed anything about the two other vaccine candidates -

Adenovirus Type-5 vector vaccines. In a press release yesterday, Globe

Biotech Ltd claimed its company is the only organisation which has three Covid-19 vaccine candidates in the WHO draft landscape.

All the three have been listed as preclinical stage vaccine candidates.

Meanwhile, Globe Biotech Ltd has signed an MoU with icddr,b, which will conduct all three phases of the clinical trials, Dr Mohammad Mohiuddin, manager of the Globe Biotech Ltd told The Daily Star yesterday.

The icddr,b is now preparing the trial protocol. Once completed, it will apply to the BMRC [Bangladesh Medical and Research Council for the trial approval," he added.

According to the US Centre for Disease Control (US-CDC), the general stages of the development cycle of clinical stage, clinical development, regulatory review and approval, and manufacturing and quality control.

The final stage trial or Phase-III clinical trial means the vaccine is at its final stage of major trials, in which the vaccine is given to thousands of people and tested for efficacy and safety.

'Globally, many vaccines have been failing even at the final stage of trials. And BANCOVID [the vaccines from Bangladesh] has just passed the first stage. It does not authenticate the vaccine is effective. We could be sure about the efficacy after the mass scale human trial," Muniruddin Ahmed, a professor of pharmacy at the Dhaka University, told The Daily Star recently. DAILY BRIEFING

Meanwhile, Bangladesh yesterday recorded 23 Covid-19 deaths and 1,209

new cases overnight. The recovery count rose to 3,02,298

after another 1,560 patients were discharged from hospitals in 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday, a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) said.

patients died during the same period, increasing the death toll to 5,646," the release said. It said the tally of infections has surged to 3,87,295 as 1,209 new cases were confirmed after 11,573

samples were tested at 110 authorised

laboratories across the country during Of the total samples tested, 10.45 percent tested positive, the release

Among the total infections, 78.05 percent patients have recovered, while 1.46 percent died so far since the first Covid-19 positive cases were reported in the country on March 8.

## "Twenty-three more Covid-19

to hold tests for admission

increasing US interest to Bangladesh.

## Bangladesh asked to be

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, Principal Secretary to PM, Member (Health) NITI Aayog, Principal Scientific Advisor, Senior Scientists, officers of PMO, and other departments

Modi noted the steady decline in the daily Covid cases and growth rate. He appealed for social distancing,

state governments and all relevant stakeholders have prepared and presented a detailed blueprint of vaccine storage, distribution, and administration.

the geographical span and diversity of the country, the access to the vaccine should be ensured speedily.

He stressed that every step in the logistics, delivery, and administration should be put in place rigorously.

It must include advanced planning of cold storage chains, distribution network, monitoring mechanism, advance assessment, and preparation of ancillary equipment required, such as vials and syringes.

Two Pan India studies on the The meeting was attended by Union Genome of SARSCoV-2 (Covid-19 virus) in India conducted by ICMR and D/o Bio-Technology (DBT) suggest that the virus is genetically stable and there is no major mutation

## Austrian foreign minister tests positive for

AFP, Vienna

Austria's Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg is self-isolating after testing positive for Covid-19, his ministry said yesterday, as the country posted a new daily record for infections.

"He has not presented any symptoms so far," he said.

The minister has cancelled a trip planned for the coming days to Britain, Denmark, Greece and Cyprus.

## VC Shirin Akhter said Bangladesh

Universities

Bishwabidyalaya Parishad would sit in another meeting soon to discuss the method of admission tests. It is certain that no students will

be admitted to a university without admission tests, said Prof Rostom Ali, VC of Pabna University of Science and Technology. When it comes to higher

education, public universities remain

students' top choice. But the number

of seats is much lower than that of

students seeking admission. Of the 46 public universities, excluding National University, Open University and medical universities, 39 universities have the capacity of enrolling around 65,000 first-year

students This year, confusion about the admission tests emerged after the government decided to award grades to candidates of Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent exams without holding the public the coronavirus pandemic.

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

HSC and equivalent exams were cancelled out of fear that they would increase risk of coronavirus transmission. More than 13.65 lakh students were expected to sit for the

exams following the closure of all educational institutions on March 17. They are to stay closed until at least October 30. The issue of whether this year's HSC exam results will be given any

weight in the university admission

The government postponed the

tests was also discussed in the meeting. "We will hold further discussions in this regard. We will reach a decision only after discussing the matter with the University Grants Commission and education ministry," said Prof

Usually, universities take the GPA of SSC and HSC exams into account, alongside admission tests, while holding the entry exams at public universities.

VCs said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Digital University VC Prof Munaz Ahmed Noor made a presentation of software through which universities will be able to hold their internal exams online with transparency.

He said, "Some VCs said they can consider online admission tests using the software following its use

in internal exams.' Rafiqul and Shirin said the

presentation was apparently good. "But nothing is 100 percent accurate. We will need to scrutinise the software by IT experts before reaching any decision," said Rafiqul.

In a statement after a meeting with public university VCs on Thursday, the UGC said Bangladesh Bishwabidyalaya Parishad, from its meeting yesterday, would decide in principle regarding the admission

"But the UGC wants that no question arises regarding the tests," the statement said.

UGC Chairman Prof Kazi Shahidullah at the meeting said the nation wants a specific guideline from the VCs regarding the admission

Usually, admission tests at public universities are held a month after the publication of HSC results.

Till last year, 32 of the 39 public universities held separate admission tests, and the remaining seven agricultural universities held a uniform admission test.

## the DNA plasmid vaccine and the a vaccine are: exploratory stage, pre-

of the Indian government.

Covid appropriate behaviour, and self-restraint in the upcoming festival National Expert Group Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 (NEGVAC) in consultation with

Modi directed that keeping in view

Covid-19

Schallenberg could have contracted coronavirus during a meeting of European Union foreign ministers in Luxembourg on Monday, a foreign ministry spokeswoman told the APA news agency.

equivalent tests.

#### Newborn back from dead in critical state

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The condition of the baby girl -- declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital early Friday but found alive before burial hours later -- is critical. She is under treatment at the Neonatal Intensive Care unit at the hospital.

"Her condition is very critical... We are trying our level best," said Brig Gen AKM Nasir Uddin, director of the hospital.

A four-member probe body led by Dr Manisha Banerjee, head of the neonatology department, has been formed to investigate the incident. The probe body has been asked to submit its report within three days.

"We will take action upon receiving the findings," the director said.

The baby's father, Yeasin Mollah, said on Friday night he saw the baby moving her limbs.

He sought blessing from all for his child.

On Friday, a doctor at the hospital declared the SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



With the Sharadiva Durga Puia less than a week away, neighbourhoods in the port city are excitedly preparing for its festivities, Volunteers, devotees, and artisans across the city are busy setting up mandaps, like this little crew of Pilkhana Puja Udjapan Committee. This photo was

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## Muted Durga Puja celebrations due to pandemic: leaders

This year's Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the country's Hindu community, will be celebrated on a limited scale amid the coronavirus pandemic, Hindu community leaders said yesterday.

They said there will be no "Kumari Puja", one of the main attractions of the five-day festival, in Dhaka, while celebrations have to be limited for devotees at mandaps

Besides, distribution of special food items will be held back this time around

Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad yesterday held a press conference at Dhakeshwari Temple premises in the capital to inform media about festival preparations.

Hindu community members will start celebrating the five-day festival on Thursday, with much enthusiasm and

religious fervour. Community leaders at the press conference also urged devotees to not bring out procession on Bijoya Dashami.

Milon Kanti Dutta, president of the organisation, yesterday told The Daily Star this year Kumari Puja will not be celebrated in Dhaka to avoid excessive crowd to maintain health guidelines.

Different puja organisers were also asked to not distribute spicy rice to avoid crowding, he said.

This year, puja will be arranged at 30,213 mandaps across the country, which is 1,185 fewer than last year, said a statement read out at the press conference.

This year, celebration at the mandaps have to be closed for devotees after 9pm while efforts have to be taken to limit people's presence throughout day, it said, citing a directive taken after meeting held with home ministry on

≶tar HEALTHLINE

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## Dr Kamal's Gonoforum expels 8 'rebel' leaders

Announces party council on Dec 12

UNB, Dhaka

Expelling its eight rebel leaders -- including Mostafa Mohsin Montu, Dr Abu Sayeed and Subrata Chowdhury -- Gonoforum, led by Dr Kamal Hossain, yesterday decided to hold the party's central council on December 12.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the party's central committee at the Jatiya Press Club. Gonoforum leader Mostak Ahmed read out decisions of the meeting.

He said the meeting decided to hold the central council of the party on December 12 to make the organisation a stronger, dynamic and well-organised one in light of the current political and organisational

Mostak said the meeting also decided to expel Mostafa Mohsin Montu, Prof Abu Sayeed, Subrata Chowdhury and Zaglul Haider Afrik from the post of primary member of the party, for not responding to a show-cause notice served on them on charge of violating party discipline and being involved in anti-organisational

Helaluddin, Latiful Bari Hamim, Khan Siddiqur Rahman and Abdul Hasib Chowdhury -- who had been suspended the party as primary members.

All but Dhaka city unit Gonoforum leader Harun Talukder present at the meeting applauded the decisions.

Later, party MP Mokabbir Khan, who presided over the meeting, said the decisions were passed at the meeting as only a member opposed those

He said their party leaders at the meeting viewed that a handful of leaders who do not comply with party discipline, obey party president and general secretary and the party charter are trying to confuse people and engage in foul play using Gonoforum's

"It can't be accepted," he said.

Mokabbir also said Gonoforum was not formed to serve the purpose of any agency, but a quarter within the party has been doing that for 26 years.

Party general secretary Dr Reza Kibria said some of their leaders have left the party and they have taken it as a usual matter in

He, however, told party leaders that they have the democratic rights to go with Montu and other rebel leaders and follow them if their activities, ideals and personality and thoughts are better than Dr Kamal's.

ii Kamai Hossain's thoughts resonate previously, have also been expelled from with you, then stay with us. There are

## Trees, hills razed for housing

Builders cutting greenery, hillocks in port city's Sholoshahar area without DoE approval

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

Sanmar Properties Limited, one of the top real estate companies in the country, has been razing greenery along with hills nearby Bangladesh Forest Research Institute in Chattogram city's Sholoshahar area for a twin multistory apartment block project.

Around hundred of trees and other vegetation were shaved off to make space for the project titled "Sanmar Knightsbridge at Duncan Hills", which is in progress without approval from the Department of Environment

Locals alleged that the real estate company engaged its excavator and dump truck to cut the hills at night. A large part of it has been cleared for the project.

DoE Chattogram (metro) ordered Sanmar Properties to stop their work and issued a notice on October 5, asking its director to explain why legal action won't be taken against

Mia Mahmudul Haque, deputy director of DoE Chattogram (metro), told The Daily Star that Sanmar Properties applied to secure approval for building retention wall for the project in December last year.

DoE asked them to get approval from Hill Management Committee headed by the divisional commissioner of Chattogram in a letter sent to them on March 10 this year and submit it to DoF he said

The company did not respond to their letter yet, he said,

#### SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

BNP leader

Mosharraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP

hospital in Dhaka last night,

He had long been

suffering from different

ailments before being diagnosed with Covid-19.

His first namaz-e-

janaza will be held today

at Mymensingh Eidgah

Ground after Zuhr prayers

and then a second janaza

will be held at Muktagachha

playing ground after Asr

prayers. He will be buried

at family graveyard in

BNP Acting Chairman arique Rahman and

Secretary General Mirza

Fakhrul Islam Alamgir

expressed deep shock at his

Muktagachha.

Tarique

death.

said the party's press wing.

Former state

minister

leader AKM

Mosharraf

Hossain died

at a private

and

Hossain dies

Let's compare transit drivers, who sit most of the day, and conductors or guards, who don't. Though diets and lifestyles are a lot similar of both groups, the drivers are about twice as likely to get heart disease than the other groups. It is just because of sitting.

**HERE IS WHY** 

People who sit for long hours continuously are more likely to die earlier from any disease. Exercise helps a little in these cases. Sitting elevates the risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.



The bad effects of too much sitting are very difficult to counter with exercise. You hardly can reverse the effects of sitting 7 hours at a time.

Surprisingly, you are more likely to have diabetes if you sit all day. It also contributes to obesity and anxiety.

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT), a clot that forms in the leg, often forms due to long time sitting. It can be serious if the clot travels and lodges in the lungs. Sometimes, it exhibits no symptom.



Sitting too much is not good **FOR YOUR HEALTH** 

The prolong sitting habit puts heavy pressure on your back muscles, neck, and spine. An ergonomic chair may not ease the problem. You need to get up and move around for a minute or two every half hour to keep your back healthy. The senior citizens who are inactive

may be more likely to develop osteoporosis (problem with weak bones) and could gradually become unable to do the basic tasks of everyday life, like bathing or using toilets. Your chance of developing different

kinds of cancers increases due to sitting more. The more you sit, the higher your odds are. The only remedy is to be more

active and move on. You need to stand up and stretch every half hour or so. You can touch your toes. Take a stroll around places. You can arrange a treadmill at your workplace. All these things can help prevent the bad effects of uninterrupted sitting and keep you a healthy life.

Source: World Health Organisation

A man haggles with a vendor over the price of veggies at "Fokinni Bazar". Set up on both sides of the rail tracks under Bijoy Sarani-Tejgaon Flyover, this market used to be the last resort for low-income people to purchase greens at a minimal price. But the recent price hike of produce has affected this bazaar too, making it difficult for many to afford.

## Even 'Fokinni Bazar' not spared from price hike

At market for 'discarded' produce, customers, vendors distraught as budget gets strained, profit declines

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MATHEWS CHIRAN

It had nearly been an hour, but Khadiza Khatun was still moving from vendor to vendor with her empty bazaar bag in Tejgaon kitchen

With the bag folded in her hand, Khadiza was looking for some vegetables within her tight budget. But wherever she went, she found the prices beyond her reach. Eventually, she decided to go to another bazaar for low-income people, popularly known as "Fokinni Bazar", under Bijoy Sarani-Tejgaon Flyover, along Khadiza, who has bene living with

the rail tracks.

When Khadiza went to buy a kg of brinjal there, to her utter surprise, she found that the price is also catching up with the mainstream market.

"One kg of brinjal is Tk 70 in normal markets, and here it's Tk 50 now. But a few months back, I would buy them for Tk 30," she said.

"Due to the pandemic, my husband couldn't find a regular job. Now, because of such high prices, we can't manage three meals a day, especially for my children," lamented

her two school-going children and day labourer husband at Purbo Nakhalpara for the last 10 years.

This is the current picture of Fokinni Bazar, which has been a godsend for the poor. But now, it too is a victim of price hike like regular markets.

The transient bazaar is set up on both sides of the rail tracks, where people living in shanties nearby sell daily goods. The sold produce is not particularly in good condition, as most are on the verge of rotting.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



## 15 transgender people get opportunity to enroll at Bangladesh Open Univ

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) has given 15 members of transgender or hijra community an opportunity to enrol at its SSC programme this

As per the decision, the transgender students from Cox's Bazar are going to be admitted to Cox's Bazar Government Girls' High School under the Cox's Bazar sub-centre of the public university.

Marking their admission, a programme was organised at the auditorium of the high school on Friday afternoon with the initiative of Hatkhola Foundation and Joydhwani.

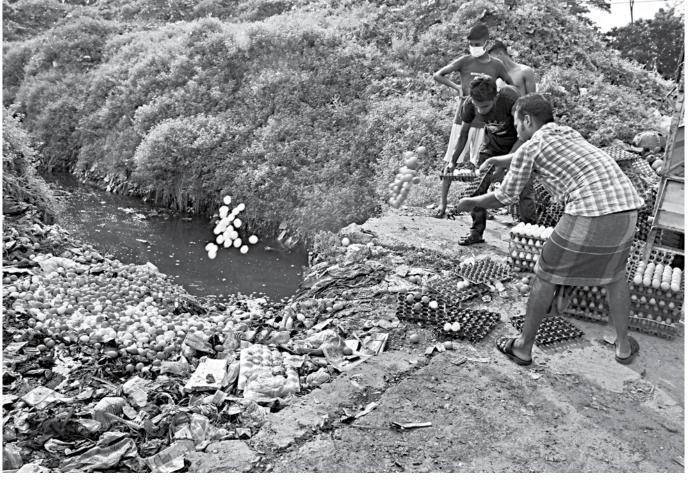
Hatkhola Foundation and Joyodhwani are two non-government organisations working for the overall development of the third gender

Cox's Bazar Awami League organising secretary Nazneen Sarwar Kaberi, Open University Cox's Bazar Deputy Regional Director Shyam Ranjan Karmakar, Cox's Bazar Government Girls' High School Headmaster Mohammad Nasir Uddin, Cox's Bazar Customs and VAT Deputy Commissioner Sushant Pal, Joydhwani CEO Helal Morshed Sohag and Hatkhola CEO Jannatul Ferdous were present among others

Speakers at the event said an extraordinary journey in the field of education in Bangladesh has started from Cox's Bazar and will be a milestone in the formation of an egalitarian, non-discriminatory and happy-prosperous country.

The 15 third gender students including Ankhi, Mohammad Hasan, Zakir Uddin, Rahim Ullah, Maina, Jonaki, Hasan Mahmud Abdullah, Abul Mansur and Ankhimani spoke at the event.

Expressing gratitude to the university authorities for opening the door to higher education, the students said they will be able to put an end to the discrimination against them if an equity based society can



Around 29,000 rotten eggs, seized by Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection from a business in Barishal, being destroyed on the bank of Jail Canal at the city's Kawnia Puranpara Moilakhola yesterday.

#### Two businesses fined for selling rotten eggs, lowquality food

Our Correspondent, Barishal

Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection (DNCRP) fined enterprises Tk 80,000 in Barishal city yesterday, for supplying rotten eggs and selling substandard food items.

The drive was led by DNCRP assistant directors at Barishal divisional unit Md Shah Soyab and Sumi Rani Mitra.

They said they fined an egg-supplying business Tk 50,000 and seized 28,000-29,000 rotten eggs from it at the city's Najirpole. The seized eggs were destroyed on the bank of the Jail Canal.

"Its owner confessed that they used to supply rotten eggs to bakeries," said Soyab. In another drive, they fined Tk 30,000 to Mokhushi Bakery in BSCIC area.

Sumi Rani told The Daily Star that stale ingredients and rotten eggs were being used to make food items at the bakery.

## Water transport workers to go on strike from Monday Our Correspondent, Barishal

To press home their 11-point demand -- which includes tri-party contracts, compensation for death on duty, and increased social safety nets -- water transport workers have announced to go on strike from the early hours of Monday.

The strike will be carried out across the country, as per the call of Bangladesh Noujan Shramik Federation (BNSF), said its president Shah E Alma Bunyan.

Water transport workers in Barishal held a rally at Barishal River Port and brought out a procession yesterday noon.

Sk Abul Hashem, secretary of Barishal unit BNSF, said water transport owners have failed to implement the tripartite contract signed in 2016 between owners, government

and water transport workers. He said they will continue their strike until the contract is enacted. Initially, it will be workers of cargo and oil tanker-type water transports who will sit for the strike. If anyone tries to thwart the programme or creates an obstacle in the fulfillment of the 11-point demand, then passenger-carrying water transport staffers will also join, said organisers.

Meanwhile, Saidur Rahman Rintu, vice president of Bangladesh Launch Owners Association, said "We requested transport workers to not observe the strike as the owners are trying everything within our capacity to implement the treaty.

However, he said launches are ready to ply during the strike if authorities can provide safety, security and skilled workers to operate vessels and passengers are willing.

## Lalon's death anniv | Trees, hills event postponed

Programmes marking death anniversary of baul mystic Lalon Shah has been postponed this year to avert spread

Local administration locked all entrances to Lalon's shrine in Kushtia, and only a small group of Lalon followers were allowed inside to perform rituals following specific health guidelines.

Some bauls went inside the shrine and performed their rituals as per the Baul traditions on the first day of Bengali month Kartik, the day Lalon passed away.

Every year, a three-day Baul Mela is hosted at the shrine in association with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

On October 4, Lalon Academy, the governing body of Lalon's shrine, decided not to hold any function due to coronavirus. Selim Haque, member of the convening committee of Lalon Academy, said the decision was taken officially as Covid-19 could spread through the gathering.

adding that DoE gave them another reminder on August 31 this year.

But before getting any approval, Sanmar Properties started cutting greenery and hills, which had a rich biodiversity as it was habitat for a wide range of snake species. They razed around 100 trees there, he

The tree cutting took place on the hills

and hill slope, which may end up impacting the binding capacity of the soil. It could even prompt a massive landslide there in case of downpour, he said.

"As they did not comply with our instruction, we issued them a notice, asking to stop the work and appear at DoE office on October 18 for a hearing," the deputy director said.

Contacted, Mainul Haque, senior manager (admin) of Sanmar Properties Limited, said the hills and trees belonged to them. "That's why we do not need any permission to cut the trees."

"The allegation will only arise when we will cut the hills, which did not happen yet," he claimed.

Mentionable, Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act 1995 (amended in 2000) clearly states cutting hills without having approval from the environment authorities

Also, many locals alleged that Sanmar Properties razed trees and hills for the ongoing project.

When pointed out, Mainul Haque said, "We obtained permission from CDA for the project. Approval from DoE is under process with its Dhaka office. They served us a notice, we will give our explanation

He kept on repeating the same statement to all the questions this correspondent had afterwards.

#### Amir Ahmed Chowdhury passes away

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'singh

educationist, Eminent cultural and organiser Prof Amir Ahmed Chowdhury Ratan died of old age complications at a Dhaka hospital on Thursday night. He was 79.

fighter was president of Sammilito Sangskritik Mymensingh and was affiliated with Awami League. He was also founder and ex-headteacher of Mukul Niketon High School.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at the city's Anjuman Eidgah ground after Juma prayers, following which he was laid to rest at his village in Hasanpur of Phulgazi upazila in Feni.

### প্লট বিক্ৰয়

৩০০ ফিটের কাছে ১নং রোডে এখনই বাড়ী করার উপযোগী ৫ কাঠার প্লট বিক্রয় হইবে যোগাযোগ-০১৭১১-৪৭২৪১৮

## Even

Vegetables -- such as, potato, brinjal and gourd -- have deep marks or bruises, because they fell off trucks. Therefore, prices are usually one-third of that of the actual market. According to locals, the bazaar was set up in the early 80s by slum people, who would collect rotten vegetables and sell them at a minimal price.

Afsa Begum, a resident of Poschim Nakhalpara for 12 years, has been going to the bazaar to buy essentials for a long time, while her husband

"There was a time when my bag would be full with veggies after spending Tk 100 here. Now, it barely fills half the bag. Half rotten vegetables are getting pricier too," Afsa said. While low-income customers are struggling to make ends meet due to

high prices, vendors are also seeing decreasing sales. As a result, their longrunning business is facing uncertainty. Vendor Md Sohel has been in the business for about five years. He

must spend Tk 300 daily to maintain his makeshift stall, and Tk 3,000 per month for house rent. Now, it is getting difficult for him to manage both. "I used to sell goods worth Tk 6,000-7,000 every day six months back,

but now, it has come down to Tk 3,000-4,000. I barely make any profit, so

it's getting tough to take care of my family in Dhaka," he grieved While talking about the reason for hiked prices, he said, "We would get half-rotten or non-fresh vegetables at minimal prices from retailers, but now we don't. We need to spend a good amount of money to buy them,

and the process also involves transportation costs. Nurjahan Begum is another vendor who is selling vegetables for 20 years. She also echoed Sohel while explaining the price hike.

"We would sell non-fresh potatoes for Tk 15 per kg, but now we've to do so for Tk 30, while in regular markets they go for Tk 40. The retailers from the main market are now selling half-rotten potatoes at higher prices to us," she argued.

"Due to this, customers are haggling more than before and buying fewer goods from us. I could profit Tk 25-30 per Tk 100 sale, but now the profit came down to Tk 10-15. Not only customers, we are victims of the . price hike as well," Nurjahan said.

## Newborn

FROM PAGE 3 baby dead after Yeasin's wife Shahinur Akter gave birth to her around 4:45am, after six and a half months' pregnancy.

Hospital staffers later put the baby in an abandoned box of gloves and asked Yeasin to take her to Azimpur graveyard, Yeasin, a driver by profession, alleged

He took the baby to the graveyard, but since he did not have Tk 1,500 for burial, he was advised to go to Rayerbazar graveyard where the burial cost is comparatively lower.

Yeasin took the baby to the graveyard, a grave was dug but a couple of minutes before the burial, the box in Yeasin's hand moved and she showed signs of being alive.

He took the baby back to the hospital.

The DMCH director said the baby was put under observation for a couple of hours but was declared dead as there was no pulse after her premature birth.

## Dr Kamal's

instances in Gonoforum that many people earlier deserted the party and joined other ones. So, it's nothing new," Reza observed. He alleged those who left Gonoforum are now trying to harm the party.

"I think it's our good luck that we could identify them at the right time. They've long been trying to harm the party staying in it, but their motive has got exposed now," he said, expressing resolve to strengthen and reorganise the party afresh in consultation with the party leaders at

Mostak said 130 party leaders, including 70 members of the convening committee, joined the meeting. Earlier on September 26, a faction of Gonoforum leaders, led by Montu,

ecided to hold the party's national council on December 26 next

At an "extended meeting of Gonoforum's central committee", he also formed a 201-member preparatory committee, led by party former general secretary Mostafa Mohsin Montu, to hold the council.

The meeting also decided to expel party general secretary Dr Reza Kibria, oresidium members AOM Shafique Ullah, Advocate Mohsin Rashid and organising secretary Mostaque Ahmed for violating party discipline and constitution, and indulging in activities that go against the party's interests and organisational unity.

They claimed that 283 leaders, including representatives from 52 districts, were present at the meeting.

#### DEMOCRACY MUST BE FUNCTIONAL: DR KAMAL

sign," Dr Kamal said.

Speaking virtually at the event yesterday, Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain said democracy must be made functional so that the country's people can exercise their basic rights. As his party is facing a split, he suggested party leaders to organise its

grassroots incorporating youths and women.

He also suggested Gonoforum leaders launch a campaign to make

people aware of democracy and their rights. We must increase the number of members of our party, not for raising our fund, but for working to bring a change. Many people are showing

interest in different districts to become our party members. This is a good

### Muted

FROM PAGE 3

Earlier, the parishad gave a 26-point directive on August 26 on limited-scale celebration of the festival.

It urged everyone to cooperate with law enforcement personnel deployed to ensure security. According to Hindu

scriptures and Bangla almanac, Durga Puja is observed in sync with the moon's cycie. The five-day festivity and prayers begin on the sixth day of full moon and ends on tenth day, or Bijoya Dashami. Durga, the slaver of

demon Mahishashur, appears to be riding a lion and accompanied by her children Ganesh, Kartik, Lakshmi and Saraswati with 10 weapons in 10 hands.

At the invocation of the devotees, she descends on the earth, stays for the next four days and leaves after slaying all evil forces and blessing the devotees.

Every year, Goddess Durga arrives on a carrier and chooses another bearer for her departure, a choice seen to predict how the next year will fare for the world.

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০১ (এক)টি অছায়ী

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জিডি-১৬৫৩

15th death anniversary of MA Samad CITY DESK

Yesterday 15th death

anniversary MA Samad, an influential figure in the

insurance industry.

Director of Bangladesh Insurance Academy and former Chairman Bangladesh Insurance Association. After retirement as Managing Director of Jiban Bima Corporation, Samad Bangladesh founded Insurance Company Ltd (BGIC), the first private sector insurance company in the

He was the founder

MA Samad was also an author, who wrote textbooks on insurancerelated topics. He was an enlisted International Expert in the Technical Assistance Program Trade and Development of the United Nations.



Rowdy CNG auto-rickshaw drivers take up most of the Sylhet-Companyganj road outside the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium, without regards for traffic discipline. Haphazard driving by these small vehicles often creates chaos on the road, locals said. The photo was taken earlier this week.

## Acute fodder crisis forces farmers to sell cattle

They are facing the shortage as the recent floods have damaged all the grass

fields in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Farmers in the district are forced to sell their cattle due to acute crisis of fodder as its price is out of reach due to recent prolonged floods and

As a result, most of the frustrated farmers and marginal cattle owners are selling their cows at lower prices.

The farmers are facing the fodder crisis as the recent floods have damaged all the grass fields here.

During a recent visit to different local markets in the district, this correspondent found that a bundle of straw was being sold at Tk 16 to Tk 18 while a pile of straw at Tk 2500 to Tk 3000.

The sellers said they have to buy straw at higher prices from other districts like Naogaon and

Cattle farmer Rakibul Islam of Govindasi in Bhuapur upazila said at present, it is not possible to keep cows due to the crisis of fodders.

He added that they are now struggling over rearing their cattle due to high prices of fodder. So, they will sell the cows.



Affected cattle farmers buy straws at higher prices as the recent prolonged floods have damaged all the grass fields in Tangail. The photo was taken from Govindasi in Bhuapur upazila recently. PHOTO: STAR

Another farmer Sohrab Hossain said now the price of milk is lower than cattle feeds.

"I used to buy per bundle of straw Tk 3 to Tk 4 but now I have to buy it Tk 14 to Tk 18. If the prices go up in this way, cattle rearing will be stopped," he added.

Sohel Miah, a straw seller at Govindasi market in the upazila, said as they have to buy straw from the wholesalers at higher prices, they are forced to sell it at a higher

"At present, I am selling per bundle of straw at Tk 16 to Tk 18 while it was sold at Tk 5 to Tk 6 before the floods," he added.

Mokaddes Ali, another seller of straw, said this year, the prolonged flood has severely damaged almost all the grass fields. Due to this, the fodder crisis occurred this time.

Swapan Kumar Debnath, upazila livestock officer in Bhuapur, said cattle farmers are facing fodder crisis as the cultivated lands have been submerged due to this year's prolonged floods and heavy rains.

They are suggesting the affected farmers to feed their cattle wheat bran and rice husk as alternative of the straw, he said.

The crisis will end as soon as harvesting of Aman paddy will start in November, he added.

## Men of municipal mayor and Uz chairman face-off over illegal toll collection

Tension has been running in Habiganj town as the supporters of the municipality mayor and Sadar upazila chairman face-off over illegal toll collection at the CNG-run autorickshaw stand in the town.

Locals said for the last few days, supporters of mayor Mizanur Rahman and Habiganj Sadar

upazila chairman parishad Motachirul Islam have been holding processions addressing other extortionist. As result, there is at risk of a bloody clash at any time.

Auto-rickshaw

rallies

each

workers blocked the main road at Muktijoddha Chattar in Habiganj town for several hours on October

Workers allege that the municipality mayor has been demanding money at the auto-rickshaw stand. They sought the cooperation of the police administration to stop the extortion.

Mizanur, also municipal AL organising secretary, said he was not involved with the Habiganj Auto-rickshaw Owners' Association.

He added that Motachirul Islam, president

of the association, is involved with the

Earlier on Sunday, Habiganj municipality employees went on strike from 11:00am to 1:00pm to protest against 'false' allegations against the mayor.

Meanwhile, supporters of the upazila parishad chairman on Monday brought out a procession in the town to protest

propaganda against him. Later, a memorandum was submitted to the deputy commissioner

against the mayor. Mayor said a huge amount of money is being extorted CNG auto stands

every month. As he

requested the owners

**Motachirul Islam** 

and workers of the auto-rickshaw not to pay the money, Motachirul Islam and his men has brought out a procession against him.

Motachirul Islam, also the general secretary of municipal AL, said "I have been elected as the best chairman among the upazila chairmen in Sylhet division. This has made one quarter unhappy. Mayor Mizan is spreading propaganda against me."

Masuk Ali, officer-in-charge of Sadar PS, said additional police have been deployed in

Greetings FROM PAGE 12 BANGLADESH RESERVE NOW £87 MILLION The foreign exchange reserve of Bangladesh now, after 10 months of its liberation, stands at 87 million pounds sterling, discloses Bangladesh Bank Governor AN Hamidullah today. Besides, Bangladesh can at any time draw 60 million pounds sterling from the International Monetary Fund. He adds that it only demonstrates the inherent capabilities of the economy of Bangladesh to quickly absorb all shocks it received during the war. As a matter of fact, the country's foreign exchange reserve as it stands today is much higher than that in the Pakistan era, which stood at 35 million pounds

#### Section 144

during the corresponding

SOURCES: October 19,

1972 issues of Bangladesh

Observer, Dainik Bangla and

period last year.

Dainik Ittefaq.

FROM PAGE 12 at the Sadarpur upazila administration, the two groups called human chain programmes at the same time in front of Sadarpur Upazila Parishad. The administration made the decision to avoid any untoward incident.

Purabi Goldar, Sadarpur upazila nirbahi officer, said, "We have imposed section 144, fearing that the situation will deteriorate if the two rival groups held programmes on the same venue."

Sattar Hossain Fakir, vice-president of Sadarpur upazila unit AL and also a follower of Zafarullah, said they took permission from the upazila administration to form a human chain, demanding punishment of Nixon Chowdhury as a case was filed against him for violating the electoral code of conduct during the by-polls for the post of chairman of Charbhadrasan Upazila Parishad.

But Nixon Chowdhury's supporters spoiled the programme by calling a counter-programme, he

Kazi Shafiqur Rahman, chairman of Sadarpur Upazila Parishad and a supporter of Nixon, said, "We wanted to form a human chain for withdrawal of the case against Nixon Chowdhury and we will continue our programme.'

The by-election to the upazila for the post of chairman was held on

October 10. On Thursday, the **Election Commission** filed the case with Charbhadrasan Police Station against Nixon for flouting the electoral code during the by-polls.

## Housewife gang-raped

in a village of Char Montaj union around 9:00pm and raped her after tying her hands

They also looted cash and some gold ornaments from the house, claimed the

The incident happened while her husband was out of the house, added the

The woman is undergoing treatment at Patuakhali General Hospital. The accused have been threatening her

to not file a case, she said. The woman could not file a case yet as she is undergoing treatment at the hospital,

superintendent of Patuakhali Police. In Jamalpur's Sarishabari upazila, police on Friday night arrested a teenager in a case filed for raping a nine-year-old physically challengedgirl.

said Md Mahfuzur Rahman, additional

The arrestee, 16, resident of Bogarpar village under Pugaldigha union in the upazila, is a neighbour of the rape victim's The victim's father, a rickshaw-puller,

filed the rape case accusing the 16-yearold boy with Sarishabari Police Station on Friday night. At around 11:00am on October 13, the boy entered the house and raped the girl

in the absence of her parents, said Fazlul Police Station

In Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj, a couple was arrested on a rape-related charge early yesterday, said Aminul Islam, Officer-in-Charge (operation) of Nabiganj Sadar Police Station on Friday afternoon.

MA Hakim told The Daily Star yesterday.

Besides, he said, Dhaka South City

Corporation (DSCC) invited the internet

service providers and cable operators

tomorrow (Sunday) to meet the mayor for

a discussion to resolve the issue. So, they

hope there will be a positive discussion,

principal secretary to the prime minister

will brief the PM on the matter today,

adding, therefore that the strike should be

suspended until a decision is taken by the

significant contributions towards digital

Bangladesh. So, the government will take their logical demands seriously," the

Jabbar said that the DSCC has verbally

assured the two associations that they will

not remove wires from Sunday till there is

"We don't have any divisions between us.

We are living here year after year, sharing

our joys and sorrows and helping each

other," said Indian citizen Khaybar Ali, 79,

He also demanded initiatives to renovate

Currently, there are legal complexities

over constructing any infrastructure

adjacent to the border but necessary steps

should be taken through the officials

concerned of both countries to renovate

a resident of Jhakuatari village.

The mosque of harmony

"Internet service providers have made

Jabbar said in the meeting that the

Hakim added.

minister said.

FROM PAGE 12

ISPs suspend shutdown

They are identified as Azir Uddin, 40, and his wife Nazma Begum of Gumgumia village in the upazila, he added.

The victim's mother filed a case on Friday night with Nabiganj Police Station for the rape of her 16-year-old daughter. According to the case statement, the girl went to her aunt Nazma Begum's house to

learn tailoring. On the evening of October 14, Nazma's husband Azir Uddin took the 16-yearold to another room and raped her, with

Nazma's assistance, it stated. In Madaripur Sadar upazila, Rab arrested three men on Friday evening for abducting and raping a housewife.

The accused are Faruk Hossain, 46, of the Panichatra area, and Taiub Ali, 48, and Liton Hawladar, 49, of the Mohisherchar

The victim is a housewife, 28, who lives in a rented house in Panichatra.

Iftekharuzzaman, company commander of Rab-8 in Madaripur said, "Faruk abducted the housewife from Panichatra area on October 13 and took her to a rented house in the Kalabari area. There, he and two of his friends Taiub Ali and Liton Hawladar raped her."

On Friday morning, the victim managed toinformRab about her situationover the phone.

the housewife, arresting Faruk there redhanded. Later, Rab arrested Taiub Ali and Liton Hawladar from the Panichatra area.

The victim filed a case with Madaripur

Earlier, on October 12, Internet service

providers and cable operators threatened to

shut down their services across the country

for three hours -- from 10:00am to 1:00pm

demands are not met after DSCC started

the "last mile cable" issue permanently;

setting the prices of internet and cable

TV services by the ministry concerned at

each level including homes, offices, and

banks; setting the prices of NTTN by the

government to provide low-cost internet

and cable TV services; and measures to

ensure that NTTNs have the capability for

uninterrupted service delivery to customers.

ISPAB and COAB claimed DSCC started

removing overhead cables from all roads

from August without serving any prior

notice to internet service providers and

the rules and never cross the barbed wire

the mosque. After offering prayers and

exchanging greetings, we return to our

"We only use the border road to go to

Contacted, Humayun Kabir Mithu,

chairman of Pathordubi Union Parishad

in Bhurungamari, said, "People of both the

villages are relatives of each other. After the

Partition in 1947, some of them are now

Indian citizens and some are Bangladeshis.

"All of them share the same culture,

fence to enter into Bangladesh.

every day from October 18 if their

Their other demands include fixing

an alternative arrangement.

removing overhead cables.

cable TV operators.

village in India."

## Telescopes FROM PAGE 12

"The idea of a black hole 'sucking in' a nearby star sounds like science fiction,' said Matt Nicholl, a lecturer and Royal Astronomical Society research fellow at the University of Birmingham, lead author of the study.

disruption event."

black hole, it is subjected to the phenomenal strength of the black hole's gravity. The star can be

physically torn apart and its matter pulled into long strings, a process known as "spaghettification".

"When these forces exceed the star's cohesive force, the star loses pieces that rush into the black hole," Stephane Basa, a researcher from the Marseille Astrophysics

"This exceptional influx of matter produces intense electromagnetic emissions. months while the debris is

half of the star remained after the tidal disruption

has disappeared," he said. "That's already titanic."

#### Biden

FROM PAGE 12 Instead, Trump tossed crowd red meat on immigration, race, and his conspiracy theory that Biden is steeped in

Spicing his stump speech with lurid exaggerations, Trump claimed that the "Biden family is a criminal enterprise.'

"have nothing but disdain for your values" and "want to turn America into a communist country" -- a reprise of his successful 2016 message tapping into white, working-class resentment.

"It's time we sent a message to these wealthy liberal hypocrites," he told the cheering crowd in Macon, Georgia on Friday night.

into racially charged comments on Latin American migrants, saying Democrats will "flood your communities with illegal aliens, drugs, crime."

one of his most outspoken critics, the Somali-American Democratic congresswoman Ilhan Omar, saying "she hates our country" and "comes from a place that doesn't even have a government.' Trump had still more

venom for journalists, whom he called "the enemy of the people."

01713 367486

## AL runners win Dhaka-5, Naogaon-6 by-polls electoral symbol of the ruling party.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League candidates have secured their places in both Dhaka-5 and Naogaon-6 constituencies in the by-polls amid noticeably low voter turnout. According to unofficial results, Kazi

Monirul Islam got elected from Dhaka-5 whereas Anwar Hossain was elected from Naogaon-6, defeating their rivals by vast number of votes.

Monirul got 45,642 votes in Dhaka-5 whereas his rival Salahuddin Ahmed, candidate of the BNP, bagged 2,926 votes. The voter turnout in the constituency

was 10.43 percent. In Naogaon-6 by-polls, Anwar Hossain defeated his archrival, BNP's Md Rezaul

Islam, by 100,917 votes. The voter turnout in the constituency was 36.4 percent.

The by-polls in both constituencies started at 9:00am and continued till 5:00pm without a break.

In Dhaka-5, not a single vote was cast in several polling stations, including the one at Barnamala Adarsha High School and College, till 2:00pm.

In different polling stations, supporters of Kazi Monirul Islam were seen trying to ended. cast votes in groups with the assistance of polling officials and in presence of law enforcement agencies.

They, however, finally failed as the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) did not recognise them as valid voters.

Members of law enforcement agencies -- police and ansar -- and the Election Commission officials were seen inactive while people were entering polling booths wearing badges with boat symbols, the A correspondent of The Daily Star was

also barred from entering the polling station at Sheikhdi Abdullah Molla High School (college building) by the AL men. The correspondent was told that the

polling officials were taking lunch.

While arguing with them, this correspondent saw that some five to six people, wearing badges of boat symbol, were asking the polling officer inside that booth to make arrangements for them to cast their votes.

They later forced this correspondent to leave, threatening dire consequences if they

The total number of voters in Dhaka-5 constituency is around 49,500 but only 3,011 votes were cast till 3:30pm.

Polling agents of Salahuddin Ahmed, candidate of the BNP, were not seen in any of the 18 polling stations in the

Meanwhile, Sheikh Rejaul Islam, the BNP candidate of Naogaon-6, rejected the voting, alleging different irregularities in

He made the announcement around one-and-a-half hours before the by-polls

During a press conference at 3.30pm, Rejaul said his voters were barred while his agents were driven out at most of the total

Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda told reporters that the by-polls were held in a free and fair atmosphere as they

did not receive any allegation. He also pointed out that the coronavirus situation could be the reason for the low voter turnout in the by-polls.

## Police hold anti-rape

torture of a woman in Noakhali's Begumganj upazila -- which was the spark for widespread protests across the country -- has embarrassed the nation, Chattogram Range Deputy Inspector General of Police Anwar Hossain said.

"There are no words to condemn the incident," he said while addressing a police rally against rape and violence against women at Begumganj upazila as part of the nationwide police programmes. The police officer said law enforcement

agencies should be more vigilant so that such incidents do not recur in future.

Citizens need to be more aware and report any incident to police immediately. Then no one will get a chance to escape after committing a crime, he said.

On September 2, the woman in

Noakhali was gang-raped but police apparently came to know about the incident only after a video of the woman being stripped and beaten was circulated by the rapists had gone viral.

The incident triggered condemnation, leading to continuous street protests and forcing the government to incorporate the death penalty for rape in the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

DIG Anwar said nearly 95 percent of people are oppressed by only 5 percent of people and that police have to come closer to people. They will have to restore people's trust through their

Several lakh people across the country watched the rallies through social media, added the release from Police Headquarters.

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#### the mosque, he added. tradition, and lifestyle. Even the border Indian national Ahmed Ali, 67, of forces of both the countries have never Jhakuatari village, said, "We don't violate" made any trouble with this issue." Ardern scores landslide

when a volcanic eruption at White Island, also known as Whakaari, killed 21 people and left dozens more with horrific burns.

"There's no doubt the strong, great leadership we've had from Jacinda Ardern has been a massive factor in all this," Labour Party president Claire Szabo said of her party's win on broadcaster TVNZ.

Yesterday's vote marked the first time any leader won an absolute majority since New Zealand adopted a proportional voting system in 1996 and was the party's strongest showing since World War II.

Opposition leader Judith Collins conceded an "outstanding result" for Labour and congratulated Ardern on her

"But that's exactly what happens in a tidal

When a star strays too close to a supermassive

Laboratory, told AFP.

which last for several digested." Basa said that around

"'Only' half of its mass

the large, loudly cheering

corruption.

He said Democrats

Trump also dived

And he lashed out at

And he seemed to acknowledge things might not go his way in the end.

## 1.1m in Rakhine barred from voting

More than 1.1 million voters in Myanmar's western Rakhine state will be disenfranchised in upcoming national polls, according to data released by the election commission Friday, a move experts warned could fuel yet more conflict.

Civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) is widely expected to be returned to power in the November 8 election —- only the second since the country emerged from outright military rule.

But with virtually all Rohingyas stripped of citizenship and voting rights, many observers had already dismissed the polls as lacking credibility.

On Friday, citing security reasons, the election commission said security reasons meant voting would not take place in areas with hundreds of thousands more people -- including more than 800,000 in Rakhine . Over half of the 600,000 Rohingyas remaining in Myanmar live in Rakhine, bringing the total number of disenfranchised in the state to more than 1.1 million, nearly two thirds of the state's population. More than one million more stateless Rohingya languish

in refugee camps in Bangladesh.

Arakan Army (AA) militants are locked in battle with the military in Rakhine's northern fringes as they fight for more autonomy for ethnic Rakhine Buddhists. The unrest has killed or injured hundreds and forced 150,000 from their homes since the civil war intensified in late 2018.

But the ethnic Rakhine Arakan National Party (ANP) secretary Tun Aung Kyaw said the decision to cancel the vote had been taken for political rather than security reasons.

"Most townships in Rakhine state where elections will not be held are areas the ANP would definitely win, so this is a deliberate ploy," he told AFP, adding it was "discrimination" against ethnic minorities.

Yangon-based analyst Richard Horsey agreed this would likely tilt the election in Rakhine decisively in favour of Suu Kyi's NLD. "There is a very serious risk that this will provoke increased armed conflict and political violence in Rakhine," he said.



the conflict over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.

PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS



## US ELECTION 2020 15 DAYS TO GO

## Trump 'is the most flawed person I ever met'

Former White House chief of staff allegedly told his friends; CNN to air warnings from former officials

CNN ONLINE

Former White House chief of staff, retired Marine Gen. John Kelly, has told friends that US President Donald Trump "is the most flawed person" he's ever known.

"The depths of his dishonesty is just astounding to me. The dishonesty, the

transactional nature of every relationship, though it's more pathetic than anything else. He is the most flawed person I have ever met in my life," the retired Marine general has told friends, CNN has learned.

The reporting comes Sunday night, "The Insiders: A Warning former senior administration officials -counsel John Mitnick -- explain why they think the president is unfit for office.

Kelly's sentiments about the president's transactional nature and dishonesty have been shared by other former members of the Trump administration who also appear in the special.

Olivia Troye, a former top adviser to Vice President Mike Pence, has said the

president knew about the impact the coronavirus pandemic would have on the US by mid-February, but that "he didn't want to hear it, because his biggest concern was that we were in an election year."

Elizabeth Neumann, from a new CNN special scheduled to air another former DHS official, had criticized Trump for not condemning White from Former Trump Officials," in which supremacy after the first presidential debate

in September. including former national security adviser Trump did say on Thursday during a John Bolton, former Health and Human town hall on NBC that he condemned Department of Homeland Security general supremacy, OK?," Trump told NBC's to the Post. Savannah Guthrie. "I've denounced White supremacy for years.'

## NY POST REPORT ON BIDENS' GRAFT Twitter backtracks AFP, Washington

Twitter has altered its policy on hacked content after its decision to block a news report critical of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden provoked Republican

The social media behemoth -- used by hundreds of millions worldwide -- said late Thursday it would in future only block stolen information which was posted directly by hackers, and label any other information of questionable provenance.

Senate Republicans earlier said they would subpoena Twitter chief executive Jack Dorsey to testify before two different committees on why the company blocked links to an article in the New York Post alleging corruption by Biden in Ukraine.

Republican senator Ted Cruz called the decision "election interference," while Trump -- who trails Biden in polls 19 days before the presidential poll -- decried the blockage by both Twitter and Facebook.

The Post's story purported to expose corrupt dealings by Biden and his son Hunter Biden in Ukraine. The newspaper claimed that the former vice-president, who was in charge of US policy toward Ukraine, took actions to help his son, who in 2014-2017 sat on the board of Ukraine energy company Burisma.

But the outlet's source for the information raised questions. It cited records on a drive allegedly copied from a computer said to have been abandoned by Services scientist Rick Bright and former White supremacy. "I denounce White Hunter Biden, that Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani gave

> The Biden campaign rejected the assertions of corruption in the report.

#### 'ISLAMIST TERROR ATTACK' IN FRANCE

## Nine arrested after teacher beheaded

Teen Chechen suspect shot dead

AFP, Conflans-Sainte-Honorine

The man suspected of beheading a French teacher who showed his students controversial anti-Muslim cartoons was an 18-year-old Chechen, a source said yesterday, in what President Emmanuel Macron called an "Islamist

Police have detained nine people over Friday's attack near the middle school where the teacher worked in Conflans-Saint-Honorine, a usually quiet northwestern

suburb around 30 kilometres (20 miles) from central Paris. The assailant was shot by police and later died of his

Police said the victim was history teacher Samuel Paty, who recently showed the cartoons as part of a class discussion on freedom of expression that had prompted complaints from parents. Four of the suspect's relatives -- two brothers and his

grandparents -- were initially detained by police for questioning. A judicial source told AFP yesterday that five more people had been detained, including the parents of a child at the school where the teacher was working. The attack came as a trial is in progress over the

satirical magazine, which had published the cartoons that unleashed a wave of anger across the Islamic world. The attacker shouted "Allahu Akbar" ("God is greatest")

January 2015 massacre at the offices of Charlie Hebdo

as police confronted him, a cry often heard in jihadist attacks, a police source said. Visibly moved, Macron said that "the entire nation" stood

ready to defend teachers and that "obscurantism will not win". His Elysee Palace said Saturday that a "national tribute" would be held in Paty's honour, without setting a date.

#### Pakistan ex-PM accuses army chief of ousting his government

REUTERS, Lahore

Former Pakistani Minister Nawaz accused the country's army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa of toppling his government, pressuring the judiciary, and installing the current government of Prime Minister Imran Khan in the 2018 elections.

Sharif was speaking via video link from London to a gathering of tens of thousands of people organised by opposition parties to kick-off a countrywide protest campaign in the eastern city of Gujranwala aiming to

oust Khan's government.
"Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, you packed up our government, which was working well, and put the nation and the country at the alter of your wishes,' Sharif told the gathering -the largest since the 2018 elections.

former prime minister also accused the chief of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence spy agency of being involved in conspiring against his



Nine major opposition parties formed a joint platform called the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) last month to begin nationwide agitation against the government.

Sharif was sacked by the Supreme Court in 2017 on corruption charges and left for London last November for medical treatment. He blames generals and judges for what he says were trumped up charges.

Pakistan's military denies meddling in olitics.

Maryam Nawaz, the daughter and political heir of Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto, the son of assassinated former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto who heads her Pakistan People's Party (PPP), also addressed the gathering.

Speakers at the gathering called for Khan's resignation and an end to military's interference in politics.

The next general election is scheduled for 2023.

A policeman gives the three-finger salute to pro-democracy protesters from a police bus at Wongwian Yai in Bangkok yesterday, as they continue to defy an emergency decree banning protests.

#### **COVID-19 VACCINATION DRIVE**

## India to pick 300m first

Curfew, new curbs come into force in France, UK

India yesterday began to identify about 300 million people who would be given Covid-19 vaccine first when it is ready as millions of Europeans faced tough new coronavirus restrictions due to spiraling second wave of infections.

Globally the novel coronavirus has killed at least 1,105,691 people since the outbreak emerged in China last December, according to a tally prepared by AFP. At least 39,368,710 cases have been registered.

On Friday, 6, 118 new deaths and 403,629 new cases were recorded worldwide.

The Times of India said that frontline health and sanitation workers, police officials and elderly people with comorbidities will get the vaccine on priority. The plan, which is still in the draft stage, aims to cover 23% of the population in

the first phase. The final plan is likely to be ready by end October-November, the report said. The selected individuals will be given an estimated 600 million doses.

In France, about 20 million people in Paris and several other French cities were facing the start of a 9 pm-6 am curfew after the country on Thursday saw a new high of 30,000 cases in 24 hours. The move will last at least a month.

In Britain, restrictions are being ramped up with bans on indoor meetings between members of different households in London and several other English cities.

About 28 million people -- half of the population of England -- are now subject to tight social restrictions.

Elsewhere in Europe, Poland, the Czech Republic and Belgium all announced daily record caseloads.

#### Thai protesters return to streets after clashes

AFP, Bangkok

Thousands of Thai prodemocracy protesters massed in multiple locations across Bangkok yesterday, defying an emergency decree banning gatherings for the third consecutive day after confrontations saw riot police use water cannon on peaceful demonstrators.

But the escalation in police tactics has not cowed the burgeoning youth-led movement, which is demanding the resignation of a premier first brought to power in a military coup and reform of the kingdom's powerful monarchy.

"I'm concerned for my safety but if I don't come out, I have no future," said business student Min, 18, equipped with a helmet and gas mask as she arrived in Bangkok's northern Lat Phrao district where more than 2,000 protestors took over a major intersection.

They raised a threefinger salute as passing vehicles honked in support and flashed a thumbsup at the mostly blackclad protesters. At least 10,000 protesters rallied at different points of the city.

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha announced Friday an emergency decree banning gatherings more than four people. The former army chief also rebuffed calls for his resignation.

Contact details of official inviting tender

GD-1648

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders

At least 65 prominent protesters have arrested since Tuesday.

#### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Ministry of Primary and Mass Education Directorate of Primary Education Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III) 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205 Invitation for Re-Tender

No. 38.01.0000.191.02.049.17-1042 Date: 12/10/2020 KEY INFORMATION Ministry of Primary & Mass Education Ministry Directorate of Primary Education. Procuring entity name Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III Procuring entity code Procuring entity district Dhaka. Laptop (70 Nos.) & Printer (70 Nos.) Invitation for Invitation Ref. No. 88.01.0000.191.02.049.17-1042 KEY INFORMATION Open Tendering Method (OTM) FUNDING INFORMATION Budget and source of funds Government of Bangladesh (GOB) PARTICULAR INFORMATION 224010700 Project/programme code Project/programme name Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-II Tender package No. Laptop & Printer Tender package name Tender last selling date Tender submission date & time 28/10/2020 at 12.00 Noon 28/10/2020 at 03.00pm. In presence of tender submitting person (if any) Tender opening date & time Name & address of the office(s Office of the Project Director, Primary Education Stipend Director (Pl. & Dev.), Directorate of Primary Selling tender docume Project (Phase-III), 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205. Receiving tender documents Office of the Project Director, Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III), 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205. Opening tender documents Office of the Project Director, Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III), 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205 /date/time of pre-tender meeting INFORMATION FOR TENDERER The tenderer must be authorized distributor or dealer or manufacturer of the brand Eligibility of quota ii) The tenderer shall have a minimum 3 (three) years specific experience in the supply of similar goods in Bangladesh. iii) The tenderer have to submit attested copy of the following documents: a. Valid and up-to-date trade licence b. Up-to-date income tax clearance certificate with TIN number. c. VAT registration certificate. d. Original and updated bank solvency certificate e. Experience certificate on similar type of works. f. Photocopy of Treasury Chalan of buying tender documents. iv) All activities in connection with the said work will be guided as per "The Public Procurement Act-2006 & Public Brief description of goods or works Supply of Laptop & Printe 03 (three) years warranty for the system unit supported by the manufacturer website Tk 1000/- is to be deposited through Treasury Chalan (non-refundable). Brief description of related services Price of tender documents Taka (Code No. 1-2431-0001-2366). Tender security amounts in Tk Completion time in weeks 2 weeks from the signing of contract 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka 1,00,000/- (one lakh) only PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS Md. Eusuf Ali Name of official inviting tender Designation of official inviting tender Project Director Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III), 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205 Address of official inviting tender

Tel: 9113595, Email: pd.pesp02@gmail.com

National vitamin A campaign

# Delivering a lifesaving micronutrient to children in Bangladesh

Vitamin A deficiency is a public health concern all around the world, affecting children under five in more than half of all countries. In South Asia, which has onefifth of the world's population, 44-50% of pre-school children are affected by severe vitamin A deficiency (VAD). This causes visual impairment and night blindness, and weakens the immune system, putting a child at greater risk of disease and early

In 1973, to safeguard the health of children and provide them with this critical micronutrient, the government of Bangladesh initiated the 'Nutritional Blindness Prevention Programme', which evolved into the 'National Vitamin A Plus Campaign' (NVAC) in 2003. The programme has been a major success in reducing under-five mortality in the country and improving community awareness about VADs, foods rich in vitamin A, and vitamin A supplementation (VAS).

To ensure that no child gets left behind in receiving biannual doses of vitamin A, NVAC has initiated the targeted child-to-child search strategy proposed by Nutrition International. The unique approach tracks children residing in the 240 'hard-to-reach' unions and administers VAS to them through door-todoor visits by healthcare providers.



With such targeted health and nutrition interventions, Bangladesh has made significant strides in improving child health and nutrition. The prevalence of VAD among preschool children of the country remains at 20.5%, much less than the world's average.

However, with the advent of COVID-19, like many other developing nations, Bangladesh is facing a malnutrition crisis. A study conducted by the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC) predicts chronic stunting to rise to 41% - a full ten-point increase over 2017-18 levels - setting back progress by almost a decade.

Addressing nutrition and food insecurity needs to be a key component when provided twice yearly to children under five, it is evident that such reliable and safe distribution of vitamin A both during and after this pandemic will have multiple benefits. Although there is no current evidence

mortality reduction of more than 12%

on the effectiveness of vitamin A for the treatment of COVID-19 or the reduction in the severity of the specific symptoms it causes, VAS is especially important for vulnerable children in the context of an infectious disease outbreak. Not only does it reduce the incidence of diarrhoea by 15% and the incidence of measles by 50%, but it also contributes to reducing the odds of child stunting, which can have lifelong health benefits.

Vitamin A supplementation remains an essential health and nutrition intervention, and all children aged 6 to 59 months — including those who are suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 - should continue to receive vitamin A supplementation.

The frontline of any country's health system is the immune system of its people, which is fueled by good nutrition. It is crucial to invest in nutrition now so that a generation of children are not robbed of their full potential.

The author is the Country Director of Nutrition International, Bangladesh. E-mail: ssiraj@nutritionintl.org

## World Hospice and Palliative Care Day 2020

of the nation's COVID-19 response.

2020 is a welcomed step that will

provide the lifesaving micronutrient

all over the country, including half a

million in hard-to-reach areas.

realities and has reinstated the

administration of vitamin A to all

in safety protocols developed by the

International. Considering that VAS

Global Alliance for Vitamin A (GAVA),

has shown to contribute to an all-cause

which is hosted and chaired by Nutrition

to approximately 20 million children

The NVAC has adapted to COVID-19

children 6-59 months old. Health workers

involved in this process have been trained

The reinstating of the NVAC in October

## My Care, My Comfort



## **Bariatric surgery tied to longer** life expectancy among obese

Obese adults who undergo bariatric surgery have longer their life expectancy still lags behind that of the general population — according to long-term follow-up from an observational study in the New England Journal of

Researchers in Sweden followed some 2,000 obese adults who underwent bariatric surgery, 2,000 matched obese controls who did not have surgery, and 1,100 adults from the general population for roughly 20-24 years.

The median life expectancy in the surgery group was 3 years longer than among controls, with surgery patients showing significantly lower cardiovascular and cancer mortality. However, the surgery group's life expectancy was still 5.5 years shorter than that of the general population.

The researchers note that the higher mortality in the surgery group relative to the general population may be attributable to "the above-normal Body Mass Index (BMI) even after bariatric surgery" and "irreversible effects of obesity-related metabolic dysfunction," among other factors.

Prof Dr Kazi Manzur Kader

The incidence of cancer as a noncommunicable disease is increasing globally. Bangladesh is no exception to this. The total number of cancer patients in Bangladesh is about 1.5

Cancer is controllable in many cases due to advanced treatment in oncology. The treatment modalities are surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, targeted and biological treatment. It is very important to diagnose cancer in the early stages and start treatment at the right time, which will provide better results.

Cancer is not always detected in the early stage in Bangladesh. As a result, diagnosis is late due to which cancer spreads and causes severe complications that need palliative

Throughout time, people have uffered lite-limiting illnesses but there was not always a system in place to make sure that their last days were comfortable. In the 19th century, the action of hospice care was taken on primarily by women. The attention hospice care would achieve in the next century would be because of these women.

By the 20th century, more hospitals with hospice care were established. 'The Sisters of Charity' was an organisation in Ireland that helped the impoverished population of Dublin in the 19th century, and by the 20th century, they had developed other facilities across the globe. This included St. Joseph's Hospice, which was critical in the history of

In 1987, Dr Declan Walsh established the first hospital-based palliative care centre. Today, there are thousands of hospice agencies across the globe and it continues to grow. The first World Hospice and Palliative Care Day was observed in 2005 and it has been going strong ever since. World Hospice and Palliative Care Day takes place on the second Saturday of October. The concept of palliative care is broadly

will have advanced, uncontrolled and terminal stages of the diseases, where adequate symptoms control and comfort in life would be the aims of treatment.

Cancer does not trouble the patient alone, the agony spreads to their relatives and friends too. There is not much awareness amongst the general practitioners and the doctors of other specialties regarding the care of advanced



based on the role of a physician, as stated in a 16th century aphorism -"To cure sometimes, to relieve often, and to comfort always.

Cancer cure rates with our current practice of multimodality cancer therapy are in a range of 40-50% in most of the developed nations. Thus on a current estimate, approximately 50-70% of patients in developed and developing countries respectively

cancers. Only recently, WHO has taken a firm step in the care of these desperate advanced cancer patients. The National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) of our country has included cancer pain control as one of its agendas.

The writer is the Head of the Department of Oncology, Delta Medical College and Hospital, Bangladesh. E-mail: manzur2001bd@yahoo.com



## Herd immunity approaches to COVID-19 control are a 'dangerous fallacy'

A group of researchers warn that a so-called herd immunity approach to managing COVID-19 by allowing immunity to develop in low-risk populations while protecting the most vulnerable is "a dangerous fallacy unsupported by the scientific evidence".

Faced with a second wave of COVID-19, and more than a million recorded deaths worldwide, the authors present their view of the scientific consensus on our understanding of COVID-19, and the strategies that need to be put in place to protect our societies and economies.

The open letter, referred to by its authors as the John Snow Memorandum, is published recently by The Lancet. It is signed by 80 international researchers with expertise spanning public health, epidemiology, medicine, paediatrics, sociology, virology, infectious disease, health systems, psychology, psychiatry, health policy, and mathematical modelling.

They state: "It is critical to act decisively and urgently. Effective measures that suppress and control transmission need to be implemented widely, and they must be supported by financial and social programmes that encourage community responses and address the inequities that have been amplified by the pandemic."

The letter concludes: "The evidence is very clear: controlling community spread of COVID-19 is the best way to protect our societies and economies until safe and effective vaccines and therapeutics arrive within the coming months. We cannot afford distractions that undermine an effective response; it is essential that we act urgently based on the

## New electronic survey manual supports countries to combat micronutrient deficiencies

A new micronutrient survey manual (2020) and toolkit, developed in collaboration by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Nutrition International were published recently to meet the demand of countries interested in assessing the micronutrient status of their populations.

Addressing micronutrient malnutrition is one of the greatest global health challenges. Surveys assessing micronutrient status provide a basis for policy makers and programme implementers to understand the magnitude of micronutrient deficiencies and to gather the evidence needed to improve programming.

This user-friendly resource enables programme managers, government officials and researchers alike to access the entire knowledge library of best practices and resources for conducting micronutrient surveys through an interactive website.

Certain population groups, especially women and children, are at greater risk of micronutrient deficiencies. Micronutrients are critical for a wellfunctioning immune system, which is of utmost importance during the COVID-19 pandemic. If a population has a poor status for key micronutrients, such as vitamin A, zinc or vitamin D, then they may be less well equipped to mount a proper immune response when exposed to viral or bacterial infections than if they had adequate micronutrient status.



## What is Osteoporosis?

- > Osteoporosis, or "porous bones", is a condition that causes bones to gradually thin and weaken, resulting in increase risk of fractures.
- Common bone sites include the spine, hip, and wrist.
- > Bone begins to lose calcium faster than they can replace it.
- Less bone remodeling takes place and the bones begin to thin
- Osteoporosis affects one in three women and one in five men over the age of 50.

## **Prevent/Delay Osteoporosis**

Eat a balanced diet rich in calcium & Vitamin D

#### **Best sources of Vitamin D**

- Exposure to sun
- Eggs
- > Fish
- > Exercise regularly

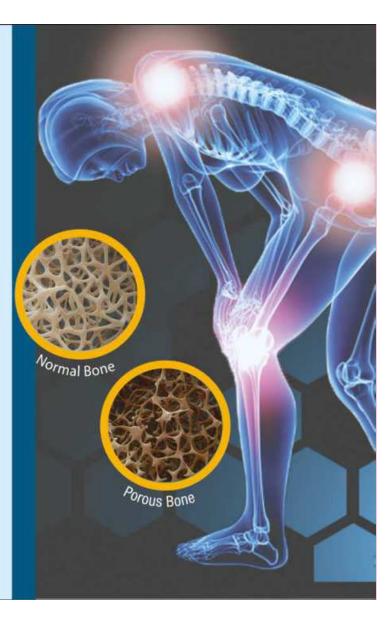
### **Best dietary sources of calcium**

- Dairy products (i.e. milk, cheese, yogurt, cream soups and pudding)
- Green vegetables (i.e. broccoli, spinach & greens)
- Seafood
- Dried peas
- Beans



Maintain a healthy lifestyle





8 | The Paily Star

# The Baily Star

LATE S. M. ALI

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## Bangladesh performed better in combating hunger

But we still have a long way to go

T is good news that Bangladesh has moved 13 notches up from last year's 88th position, ranking 75th out of 107 countries in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2020. We commend the government for making this progress. We did better than Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, particularly in the agriculture sector. However, we are lagging far behind Sri Lanka and Nepal among the South Asian countries in combating hunger. The report also mentioned that Bangladesh has a level of hunger that is "serious".

The GHI score is calculated based on four indicators—undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting and child mortality. Although the government, along with national and international NGOs, have been working hard to overcome these four obstacles to free the nation of hunger, we still have a long way to go. Data between 1991 and 2014 for Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan shows that stunting is concentrated among children from households facing multiple forms of deprivation, including poor dietary diversity, low levels of maternal education and household poverty. Also, the rates of child mortality and undernourishment are still quite high in these countries.

While Bangladesh has made extraordinary progress in reducing extreme poverty over the last few decades—between 2000 and 2018, the proportion of the population living below the international poverty line dropped from 34.5 percent to 11.3 percent—still, approximately 20 million people are trapped in poverty in the country. To free this large population from the curse of hunger and poverty, our poverty eradication programmes need to be strengthened through innovative and multi-dimensional approaches.

Although, according to the GHI report 2020, we did better in the agriculture sector, it has to be noted that the report has not presented the impact of Covid-19 on hunger and undernutrition. The pandemic and this year's devastating floods have created much uncertainty in the employment sector and in food production, which will undoubtedly increase hunger and poverty in the country, as influential think tanks of the country have predicted. Since the pandemic has undermined food and nutrition security for many, its effects will likely ripple into the future. This means special attention needs to be given to increase and diversify our food production and to reduce hunger, undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting and child mortality.

## Global brands continue to squeeze suppliers

High time brands put their money where their mouth is

EVEN months since the onset of Covid-19, the RMG industry in the country appears to be reeling from the initial shock of losing out billions of dollars in cancellations and postponement of orders from at least 1,931 global brands. Following a massive international #PayUp campaign, some of the biggest brands made public commitments to pay in full for orders completed and in production, which helped the industry turn around within a short period of time although not before tens of thousands of workers were laid off and terminated at the height of the pandemic. However, a recent report by the Center for Global Workers' Rights (CGWR), published in association with the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC), warns that the worst may be far from over, as brands and retailers are continuing to exert undue pressure on suppliers as they place new orders during the continued Covid-19

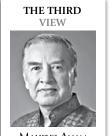
A survey of 75 suppliers from 15 countries between July 5 and August 21, 2020 shows that in 65 percent of cases, buyers demanded price cuts on new orders and on average, buyers told suppliers they must cut prices by 12 percent, relative to last year's price for the same product. Furthermore, suppliers surveyed said they have to wait 77 days after they complete and ship customers' new orders to receive payment, as opposed to 43 days prior to the pandemic. A majority of suppliers said they have less than half the order volume now relative to the same period last year and that they dismissed at least 10 percent of their workers, and are anticipating another 35 percent if current trends continue.

The global supply chain is inherently unequal, in which big brands exercise tremendous power to negotiate terms that suit their interests at the cost of suppliers—which, in the end, are borne by workers. The pandemic has brought to the fore how little brands, who otherwise make grand statements about upholding worker rights, truly care about the vulnerability of workers down their supply chain. Thus far, some brands, such as H&M, have signed a Call to Action which commits them to work with governments and financial institutions to mobilise sufficient funding to keep manufacturers in business including payment of wages, as well as income-support and job-retention schemes to address the impact of the crisis. However, it does not obligate the signatory brands to commit to any payment

It is high time we ask them to put their money where their mouth is, and honour their commitments to their suppliers, rather than use the latter's financial stress in the pandemic as bargaining leverage to further squeeze them on price. Furthermore, if and when workers are laid off due to unfair purchasing practices, brands must commit to paying a significant share of the workers' unemployment benefits. We urge countries that are home to these brands to play their part in ensuring fair practices and prices.

# One by one, the doors are being shut

## The ever-shrinking space for freedom of opinion



AST Tuesday, the home issued a statement warning social media users from home and abroad against spreading "false, fabricated, confusing and inciting statements about

the government, military, police and other law enforcement agencies." The statement, signed by senior information officer of the ministry, further condemns "spreading false and baseless news about the security forces that is threatening to ruin the peace in the country and spreading fear, concern and confusion among the general public." The statement ends with the threat that anyone not complying will face legal

Nothing is told, no information shared and no explanation given as to what triggered such a dire and allencompassing gagging statement and what are the facts that brought the home ministry to such conclusions. We know from experience that an informed public is the most effective bulwark against rumours, fake news and attempts to disrupt peace, and conversely an uninformed one is most vulnerable to "incitements and confusion."

The general public and the media have no idea what the home ministry is talking

Can't a student express the view that he or she is unhappy with the what, how and why, and the manner of what is being taught? Will reporting the frequent absence of a teacher amount to showing "disrespect"?

about. What does phrases like "threatening to ruin the peace in the country" mean? What are we to understand from such statements emanating from the home ministry itself that is charged with maintaining internal order and peace? Is the country facing some sort of danger? We need and must know, so that we can defeat

those forces of destabilisation.

Without an elaboration, we consider such statements to be disingenuous at best and downright harmful to the nation at worst. The best way to fight a "threat to peace" and the spreading of "fear, concern and confusion among the general public" is to prepare the public to fight such attempts by sharing information and equipping them to counter rumours and false information. Telling the public of imminent danger without any explanation

sharing, "liking" or posting anything that "ruins the image of the government or the state" or "disrespects any important person, institution and profession" on social media. They were also told not to post anything that could create "dissatisfaction among the general public". The heads of institutions were asked to take action against any teacher or student who violated this directive.

What sort of education are we aiming to impart? Are we planning to produce a

anything that affects the "image of the government", what sort of knowledge will they be imparting? The issue of concern is that the notice

to the department of secondary and higher secondary education was not about quality control but about thought control. For decades, we have written about the quality of education, of the archaic nature of our curriculum and the need to modernise it, of the quality of our textbooks, about the quality of our teachers, the lack of their retraining programmes, the differences between the quality of urban and rural schools, etc; and yet, the note does not address any of these vital issues but focuses on whether anything is being said or done that is critical of the government.

At each level, we are throttling the development of the free mind.

The fundamental question is, where does freedom of thought and expression, guaranteed by our constitution, stand in light of all these directives? Nurses and doctors cannot talk about the health sector, teachers and students cannot talk about education, and the general public cannot talk about the police, other law enforcement agencies and the government. I suppose the question to ask of the government is, what can we talk about?

The biggest harm that these statements by various ministries are doing to the government is sowing a seed of mistrust. It seems that the government does not trust the nurses, doctors, teachers, students and the general public. Doesn't this amount to the biggest show of no confidence by the government on its own people? Doesn't it mean that the government assumes that if the people are allowed to speak, they will speak against them? Otherwise, why these restrictions? It must be said that we already live under many restrictive laws, the most prominent and obnoxious being the Digital Security Act. With these new restrictions by different ministries imposed on people under them, the government is further stifling the exercise of freedom of opinion and expression.

Exactly when the people need to be in touch, need to exchange ideas, strengthen each other's morale through shared experiences and articulate divergent views so that we can devise a way out of the pandemic, point out what's working and what's not-newer restrictions are being put on our freedom of expression.

One by one the doors are being shut, the lights are being extinguished, windows are being shuttered and voices are being throttled, leading to an overwhelming sense of fear, anxiety, claustrophobia and frustration.

Mahfuz Anam is Editor and Publisher, The Daily Star.



An informed public is the most effective bulwark against rumours, fake news and attempts to disrupt peace.

creates the very situation that the home ministry statement is trying to prevent.

However, the home ministry's directives follow several other gagging orders that came before. On April 16, 2020, when media started revealing the unpreparedness of our public health system in handling the spread of Covid-19 and depicting the sufferings of ordinary people, instructions were issued to all nurses working in government establishments not to talk to the media.

Then on April 23, Health Minister Zahid Maleque ordered all health officials, including doctors, not to talk to the media without approval of appropriate authorities.

On May 3, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University—please note that it is a university whose teachers are among the most qualified and whose students are fully capable of holding fact based and scientifically supported views—silenced their staff from talking to the media.

Recently, on October 7, the department of secondary and higher secondary education issued a circular forbidding students and teachers from writing,

generation of problem solving learners or slogan chanting sycophants? When students are prevented from doing anything outside their prescribed syllabus and when the syllabus is itself extremely restrictive, then obviously the students will be prone to rote learning which, we know from experience, produces only paper pushers and not thought expanders. Are they going to take us to a place of pride in the 21st century world?

Take the issue of posting anything on social media that "disrespects any person, institution and profession". Can't a student express the view that he or she is unhappy with the what, how and why, and the manner of what is being taught? Will reporting the frequent absence of a teacher amount to showing "disrespect"? If a teacher posts about the corruption in his or her own institution, will that be "disrespecting" an institution? Will reporting the sexual misconduct of a teacher amount to disrespecting the teaching "profession"?

Teachers are supposed to perform the vital task of imparting knowledge. When they are warned against doing

# Covid-19 and the economic challenges for South Asian countries



industries hardest hit by the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown policies has been the travel and hospitality (T&H) sector. Ìhis sĺowdown in T&H resulted in the complete shutdown of

international in-person conferences for academic disciplines. International professional conferences have over the years provided an invaluable platform for researchers, academics and students to network and exchange ideas.

In a noble effort to circumvent the hurdles of the pandemic and to restart academic dialogue, the South Asian Network for Economic Modelling (SANEM), a Dhaka think-tank, organised a three-day online international conference on October 1-3. The theme for the SANEM International Development Conference (SIDC) 2020 was "Covid-19 and Development Challenges.

While most of the 24 papers presented at the conference came from researchers working outside Bangladesh, mostly in India, the concerns they raised had direct relevance for Bangladesh. The scholars swapped ideas with each other on a diverse set of issues: policies to revive their respective economies; how to cope with a possible resurgence of Covid-19 cases; the role of stimulus support in rejuvenating an economy and the importance of effective targeting; and the impact of the emerging vaccination undertaking on a battered healthcare system next year.

One of the take-aways from the excellent papers is the validity of the familiar theme of "uniformity in diversity" and that many countries are struggling with the same headaches. An African case study highlighted an important paradox with relevance for Bangladesh. Nigeria, like many other countries, is witnessing an economic recovery, and everyone appears to have gone back to their jobs. But micro-level data also shows that job growth has been beset by shorter work hours plus less pay. In other words, people are working alright but for fewer hours and 20 percent less

The three-day zoom conference discussed a wide range of issues and offered some interesting findings from India, Nepal, Nigeria, China and other countries. For me, a big attraction was the last session, where a blue-chip panel

> The informal sector is vital for economic recovery and more attention needs to be paid to policies to revive this sector. All the countries, both developing and developed, are scratching their heads to come up with ideas.

discussed Covid-19 and development challenges in Bangladesh. The discussion brought together Francois Bourguignon, former chief economist at the World Bank, Prof Kunal Sen, Director, United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), Helsinki, and Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud and Prof Rehman Sobhan of Bangladesh.

The lively presentations and the discussions focused on setbacks suffered by many developing countries and the effect on vulnerable groups including women, school-going children and lowincome earners.

There was a broad range of agreement on the impact of the pandemic and the areas that need to be addressed

to guarantee the U-shaped recovery that everyone aspires to. The conferees concurred on the following propositions: weaker institutions prolong recovery, poor governance is the Achilles Heels of Bangladesh, India and Nigeria, the healthcare infrastructure was weak and has been decimated by the pandemic, and national governments need to pay special attention to vaccination distribution and administration.

Prof Rehman Sobhan did not mince words from the get-go. "The notion that exists in South Asia regarding reducing poverty, which is largely derived from improved GDP growth, has to be reconsidered."

Rehman Sobhan emphasised the inequities in our healthcare system and appealed again for a renewed effort to address this age-old problem. He also said that there should be strategies to integrate the informal sector into the formal stream and acknowledge their contributions.

Discussing the issue of poverty measurement, he said, "The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the vulnerable economic status of the people living slightly over the poverty line.

Francois Bourguignon supported the viewpoints of Prof Sobhan and said, "During this crisis, the economic recession is likely to raise absolute poverty with unambiguous effects on inequality."

Kunal Sen pointed out that the pandemic has hurt the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in all areas, except one. "The Covid-19 pandemic has affected most SDGs, except SDG-13 (climate action). It has caused a reversal in gains in alleviating poverty and backtracking in globalisation," said Sen.

Prof Selim Raihan, the moderator of the panel discussion, was kind enough to invite me to ask a few questions. I asked Kunal Sen to touch on the question Abhijit Banerjee asked: Should we reformulate or reorder the 17 SDGs? On Bangladesh, my concern was triggered by a recent Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) survey which establishes that while an economic recovery was happening, there were doubts about bounce backs of income and consumption. According to

BBS, household monthly income dropped by around 20 percent while expenditures also decreased by 6.14 percent during the pandemic. While government employees and teachers suffered the least, students and labourers fared the worst. These weak spots would impede our growth next year once vaccines become available. Not only would the vaccines need to be distributed to the neediest citizens but might give rise to a logistics, storage (with dry ice) or refrigeration nightmare and overwhelm the poor health infrastructure. Also relevant were the cost and the burden of vaccination, as well as the equity of the distribution.

Obviously, it is hard to summarise all the excellent ideas and information in a short essay. Nonetheless, I will list a few in one-liners. The informal sector is vital for economic recovery and more attention needs to be paid to policies to revive this sector. All the countries, both developing and developed, are scratching their heads to come up with ideas to meet the challenge of entitlement but also to boost demand. If the public saves the stimulus checks, the economy will hurt.

The conference also provided a learning opportunity for future conference organisers. First of all, online conferences have their limitations. Conferees are able to doze off or step out of the "room" without raising hackles. Secondly, the quality of sound and available bandwidth speed can create problems. Because the network strength in different countries vary considerably, audio or video can be dropped at critical moments. Finally, participants who have to rely on the chatroom to ask a clarificatory question or "raise their hand" may often find themselves waiting for their turn when the moderators are going by the clock. On the brighter side of things, while the pandemic closed down international conferences and exchange of ideas face-toface, researchers now have more time to connect via electronic means since travel time is zero!

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# Reining in the rogue state

## Rohingyas, Bangladesh and the international community



C R Abrar

T was a blatant charade of epic proportion. On September 29, the minister of the Office of the State Counsellor of Burma blamed The Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and its supporters for "hampering the bilateral repatriation process" at the UN

General Assembly session. He accused Bangladesh, now saddled with 1.1 million Burmese nationals, of allowing ARSA and Arakan Army elements to use Bangladeshi territory as a sanctuary. Audaciously, the Burmese minister urged the Government of Bangladesh to "show its genuine political will to cooperate, by strictly adhering to the terms of the agreement signed in 2017". Reminding that his country "does not respond well to pressure", he urged the UN audience to provide "time, space and respect for its domestic accountability processes". The Burmese representative appealed others "to examine the negative narratives on Myanmar carefully and impartially, before drawing their independent conclusions.

Rejecting such "concocted and misleading assertions", the representative of Bangladesh persuasively dispelled the claim that the Rohingya issue was a bilateral concern. She reiterated that the Burmese state has created the protracted problem through "inhumane treatment" and by "unleashing a carnage" on the Rohingya. She further alleged that Naypyidaw is resorting to "distorting history and facts to justify its genocidal acts". The Bangladesh representative noted that the prevailing reality of Rakhine of "isolation, discrimination and clearance operations... obliterating villages and changing maps" are clear indications that the rogue state has no intention to create enabling conditions for the repatriation of Rohingyas.

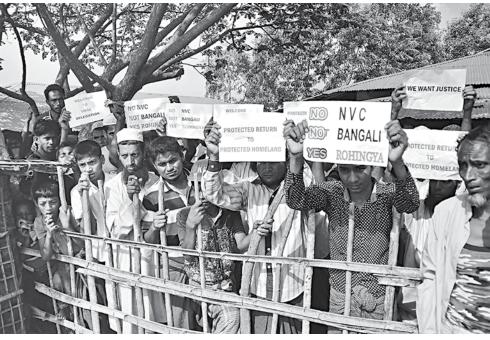
The timing of the Burmese tirade against Bangladesh is of little surprise. Several factors may have contributed to this.

Firstly, with the national elections scheduled on November 8, to garner the support of the ultra nationalists and religious zealots, the contending parties across the political spectrum of Burma are ratcheting up their anti-Rohingya (and by default, anti-Bangladesh) rhetoric with fresh vigour. They have even rolled out the fictitious claim that it is the (non-existent) Rohingya returnees from Bangladesh who have spread the Covid-19 virus in Rakhine.

Secondly, the scaling up of military operations of the Arakan Army (AA)—a rebel group seeking more autonomy for ethnic Arakanese Buddhists in Arakan and Chin states in recent times, and the increased incidences of clashes between AA and the Tatmadaw (the Burmese military), have thrown a major challenge to the Burmese politico-military establishment. Scores of civilians have been reported killed and tens of thousands displaced. Both parties have traded allegations

of abuse. Expressing its concerns over "reports of intense fighting", the United Nations has called for "urgent measures to spare civilians".

Furthermore, the recent confession of two Burmese soldiers about their participation in the Rohingya genocide has provided a major fillip to global accountability processes. The deserters have testified that they were instructed by their commanding officers "to shoot all that you see and that you hear" and "exterminate all Kalars (a derogatory term for Rohingya), including babies," validating the widely held view that the massacres, rapes and other crimes strategic initiative to collaborate with Rohingya Muslims in their quest for international justice" and presenting the two Burmese army deserters to international justice mechanisms—have been an important development with major ramifications for the political landscape of Arakan. The Arakan Army/ULA's ultimate goal is "to establish political autonomy for the Arakan or Rakhine region as well as peace and reconciliation with all co-inhabitants of Rakhine, most specifically Rohingva, who also belong to Rakhine as their shared birthplace," according to Maung



Rohingya refugees hold up placards during a visit by a UN Security Council team to Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh on 29 April, 2018. PHOTO: SAM JAHAN/AFP)

were army directed. The deserters also claimed that his unit "wiped out" 20 villages and the killings were sanctioned by the battalion commander. They also admitted to looting at the prodding of their superiors. These revelations have become a major source of anxiety for the Burmese authorities as they have come under further international scrutiny.

In addition to that, The Gambia filed case of genocide in the International Court of Justice has also gained some traction. The decision of Canada and the Netherlands to formally join the legal bid to hold Myanmar accountable over allegations of genocide has been described by observers as "historic". Calling the lawsuit "a concern of humanity", the two countries have agreed to intervene in the case "to prevent the crime of genocide and hold those responsible to account". Earlier, EU and the US had announced targeted sanctions against key functionaries in phases. Daw Suu Kyi's magic wand, which has so far worked in charming the world, appears to be losing its

And finally, the recent overtures of the Arakan Army, the armed resistance group of younger generation Rakhine Buddhists and its political wing, the United League of Arakan (ULA)—"to embark on a new

Zarni, writing in the Andalou Agency last month. This is a refreshing development in an otherwise vitiated, protracted stalemate dominated by the Burmese state meting out brute force, aided and abetted by their

international patrons of all hues. Thus, while pressure mounts on Burma on different fronts and the political reality in Arakan undergoes a subtle transformation (albeit at a slow pace), the wheels of justice and accountability mechanisms gain traction and shimmers of hope appear on the horizon for the Rohingya. Bangladesh, a country that has provided sanctuary to 1.1 million refugees, has to shore up its efforts to continue to exert more pressure on Burma.

The policymakers in Dhaka need to come to terms with the hard truth that a business-as-usual approach based on "good neighbourliness"—expecting "reconciliation of the communities in Rakhine through dialogue" and hoping that "congenial conditions for repatriation", with the Burmese honouring the conditions of the lopsided repatriation arrangement that freed Burma from any time-bound and international monitoring mechanism and retained their final say on verification—will never succeed, nor was ever meant to.

Bangladesh's past policy of ignoring the reasons for the arrival of the Rohingya from Arakan—presumably viewing them as economic migrants, whose number subsequently rose to 200,000-300,000 prior to August 2017, and thereby failing to alert the international community of the slowburning genocide that went unabated in Arakan—proved to be grave. Since 1991, its refusal to recognise the incoming Rohingyas as "refugees", pandering to the Burmese decision to deny the Rohingya their right to self identify and bestowing on them the dubious label of "forcibly displaced persons" rather than refugees (despite fulfilling stiff conditions of the 1951 Refugee Convention), all stem from its efforts to cajole, if not placate, the Burmese. This was no less evident as Bangladesh appeared to be uncritically subscribing to the discourse of "border, law and order and human mobility" skillfully crafted by Naypyidaw on the Rohingya question.

In all likelihood, the policymakers in Bangladesh under successive regimes were guided by the false optimism that through trade, investment and connectivity arrangements under the much fancied "look east" or "constructive engagement" policies, they would eventually be able to address the Rohingya problem. Time has proven that such myopic policies bereft of principles were grossly erroneous.

Addressing the Rohingya problem is the most important foreign policy challenge that Bangladesh has faced since its independence. Therefore, in the light of recent experiences, there is an urgent need for re-strategising Bangladesh's Rohingya plan. Guiding principles of such a strategy should be the recognition that Burma has thrust upon Bangladesh more than a million Rohingyas through a deliberate policy of discrimination,

Bangladeshi negotiators need to be mindful that strategic, trade and investment considerations of the major players are not necessarily a zero sum game favouring Burma.

exclusion and genocide, pursued over decades and thus far, not accounted for. Therefore, by taking a cue from the past, an all out diplomatic offensive should be launched. This may include giving the Rohingya issue its due priority in all foreign policy decisions, including bilateral and multilateral engagements. The perceived friends of Bangladesh should be communicated to in no uncertain terms that along with the humanitarian support that Bangladesh welcomes, it expects their active support in all regional and international forums in solving the Rohingya problem.

There must be a major shift in Bangladesh's

engagement with Burma. Its trade, commercial, communication and other forms of interactions should be reviewed. Downgrading the status of its diplomatic mission in Burma is likely to send a strong signal about Bangladesh's stance on the Rohingya issue, not only to the concerned country but also to its ASEAN partners and other allies, who have doggedly supported the rogue state on pretexts of "state sovereignty" and "non-interference in internal affairs" in breach of international human rights and humanitarian principles.

Bangladeshi negotiators need to be mindful that strategic, trade and investment considerations of the major players are not necessarily a zero sum game favouring Burma. They need to work out and argue what tangible and intangible benefits partners gain from their relationship with Bangladesh, and that Bangladesh expects its core interests are not dispensed off when other states pursue their bilateral relations with Burma. The issue is particularly important in view of the unacceptable Indian response to concrete measures that Bangladesh had taken over more than a decade to allay the former's crucial security concerns in the northeast, trade, transit, transshipment, communication and other matters. Also, there is a case in point to examine why our diplomatic efforts have thus had very limited success in garnering support, not only from the powerful states but also from neighbours in the region.

So far, Burma has enjoyed near complete impunity from world bodies. The UN Security Council's inaction has been patent, despite a plethora of statements from the UN Special Rapporteurs and resolutions of the General Assembly and Council on Human Rights. With pressures mounting on Burma, this is perhaps an opportune time for Bangladesh to lead a campaign to urge the UN Secretary General to invoke Article 99 of the UN Charter "to bring the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security". In all likelihood, such a move will not yield desired results; however, it will at least expose the hypocrisy of the mighty and powerful states, which over the decades have only prioritised their narrow national interests, failed to uphold the lofty human rights standards that they preach to others, but also contributed to a situation that has the potential to morph into a threat for "international peace and security".

Burma is beginning to feel that its ride on deceit and propaganda is reaching its limits. Recent developments in Arakan, international accountability mechanisms and burgeoning dissatisfaction of western states have exposed the crevices in the foundation of international support that Burma once enjoyed. It's time for Bangladesh to make a break from its past policy of appeasement and provide the rightful moral leadership to address the Rohingya problem. Let Bangladesh's act at the General Assembly on September 29 be the beginning of that process.

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# Death penalty minus political will to stop rape is just good optics



**¬** ROM harsh → legal penalties to severe moral reprimands, from street protests and sit-ins to virtual seminars and teachins, from increasing mobilisation and visibilisation of prochoice activists to critical interventions by state and non-state

actors—nothing, and no one, seems to be able to deter the rapists or protect women and

Are we missing something? Before we dig into that, we must acknowledge that few causes in recent times have united society in the way the fight to end violence against women did, especially after the Noakhali and Sylhet gang rapes. People are naturally outraged. Protestors are refusing to leave the streets even after the government hurriedly approved the death penalty as the maximum punishment for single perpetrator rape. On Friday, hundreds of demonstrators led by some left-leaning parties embarked on a two-day march from Dhaka's Shahbagh area to Noakhali's Begumganj upazila to protest against the growing incidents of rape. Earlier, the Rape Law Reform Coalition, a platform comprising 17 organisations, proposed a 10-point to-do list that includes changing the definition of rape to include all victims, regardless of their gender identity or marital status, prohibiting the use of character evidence in rape trials, enacting a Victim and Witness Protection Act, training police and court officials on sexual and gender-based violence, and providing consent classes to all

These legal and institutional reforms are long overdue and may prove vital in preventing rape and substantially increasing Bangladesh's appallingly low rape conviction rate. Will the government accede to the demands of the activists? Will it move away from the ill-advised adoption of death penalty (which, experts say, may exacerbate the problem for the victims rather than solving it)? In the unlikely event that it does, we will still have to contend with the fact that a law in Bangladesh, however well-made, is

only as effective as the law enforcement. We have a history of having wonderful pieces of legislation rendered ineffective by lack of accountability within the institutions responsible for carrying out laws. So unless the reforms being sought are also accompanied by a strong political commitment to enact them, we may never be able to end our pervasive rape culture.

What causes rape? The answer is obvious. But what causes rape to keep happening with such morbid regularity? I would like to argue that it is the result of a climate where the world circles around political beings, granting them and those in their orbit near-immunity to any fallout of their action. Acknowledging this will require a painful reckoning for the ruling party of Bangladesh, and by extension all other parties.

Often, what emboldens a rapist in the first place is their belief that they can get away with it owing to their connection with some political leader or local boro bhai. They think either their victims will never dare to report them, or police will never accept charges against them, or investigators will never find incriminating evidence, or their case will fall through the cracks in the long, winding road to justice—all because they're "wellconnected". Everyone is bound or beholden to someone in this giant orbit of power and money. How do you cure this with just legal reforms or even a "social resistance" (as one minister vaguely proposed)? Criminals know, as we should too, that beyond the carefully constructed facade of rules and laws and lofty ideals seemingly governing this country, what really runs it is a criminally motivated system of patronage, and politicians sit at the top of the heap.

There are ample cases to prove this thesis. Let me cite the two that triggered the ongoing national protests.

Exhibit 1: Delwar Hossain, the prime accused in the Noakhali gang rape case, committed various crimes under the protection of local politicians from both the ruling Awami League and the BNP. After the 2014 elections, Delwar reportedly joined Jubo League's politics and formed his nowinfamous "Delwar Bahini". Prior to that, he was a follower of a BNP-leaning criminal. Despite being wanted in three other cases, two for murder and one for possessing illegal arms, he was never arrested before.

Exhibit 2: All the men behind the gang rape at Sylhet's MC College were involved with Bangladesh Chhatra League.

It suits some politicians to claim that rapists don't belong to any political party. This is partly true and partly false—the first because no political parties encourage their members and activists to commit rapes; the second because such claims are orchestrated to shield them from any blowback for their action and to dodge scrutiny of the inner workings of their organisations. The truth is, all such rapes

After the Sylhet incident, Chhatra League naturally demanded punishment for the perpetrators, but then sought to distance itself from the accused by denying their involvement with the organisation. For too long, such denial has been a cornerstone of the damage control policy of major political parties when hit by scandals involving their members or associates or operatives. They denounce such crimes and either expel the accused or outright deny their involvement.

One may recall that after the casino scandal hit the Jubo League last year, it followed the



Few causes in recent times have united society in the way the fight to end violence against women did.

are "political". Most of the rapists in recent times were reported to have been involved, directly or indirectly, with the ruling party's student or youth or other wings. This can't be explained away as coincidental. Serial rapists like Delwar and other political operatives who committed rape drew their courage from their party affiliations. Their "marriage" is one of convenience. It ends—does it always?—the moment it ceases to be beneficial for their party.

same strategy of expelling the accused and restructuring the party hierarchy, instead of restructuring how it functions. Chhatra League's strategy was more of the same when allegations of various criminal activities were raised against its then president and general secretary, who were subsequently removed from their posts. But the system that empowered them survived. It always does. We get an idea of how the system works from the confessional statement of Anik Sarker, a

PHOTO:
ANISUR RAHMAN

key accused in the Abrar Fahad murder case, given to the court last year. Anik, who too was expelled from his secretarial position at BUET's BCL wing, said, quite candidly, "We would beat students, regardless of whether they were senior or junior. Abrar's death was an accident. The Chhatra League high command would laud us if we beat someone whose view didn't match with ours. It's the system that made us merciless." The system gave them immunity until immunity was no longer in the interest of the system.

If we really want to end the culture of immunity emboldening the criminals, we need to investigate the interaction between crime and politics and how one pivots around the other. Rape is but the most socially distasteful manifestation of what comes out of this union, a tipping point reached through the building blocks of various other crimes. Rapists, murderers, arsonists, thugs, vandals, corrupt policemen or investigators or public officials... all draw water from the same well today. Rape cannot be seen in isolation from this interplay of crimes and politics. Yes, our rape conviction rate is very low, but in what areas of crimes is the rate not so? Unless we rob all criminals of their source of power, they will go on to commit crimes or be replaced by new players who will, regardless of how harsh the punishment is or what legal reforms we

Political parties may not encourage their operatives to rape, but they stand guilty of not doing enough to discourage them. This in turn encourages the non-political rapists. So unless political parties and their affiliated organisations are also held accountable for the crimes committed by their operatives, past or present, they will always find a way to deflect blame and not do what's really needed. A principle of zero tolerance against all crimes, not just rape, must be firmly embedded in how political organisations function in Bangladesh. Otherwise, we can't expect other public institutions and authorities including police, local governments and even courts to be free from its corrupting influences

Rape culture is as much a political problem as a social one. We need a strong political commitment to end it.

Badiuzzaman Bay is a member of the editorial team at *The Daily Star*. Email: badiuzzaman.bd@gmail.com

## Robi Axiata Limited

53 Gulshan South Avenue, Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212 Telephone: +88 02 9887146-48 Fax: +88 02 9885463, Website: www.robi.com.bd/en



Public offer of 523,793,334 ordinary shares Out of which 136,050,934 ordinary shares of BDT 10 per share to employees of Robi under Employee Share Purchase Plan Offer price at BDT 10 per share, total size of fund to be raised BDT 5,237,933,340 Out of which BDT 1,360,509,340 from employees of Robi under Employee Share Purchase Plan

**ISSUE MANAGER** 

Comparative Financial Statements for last five years

Opening date for subscription: 17 November, 2020

Closing date for subscription: 23 November, 2020

"পুঁজিবাজারে বিনিয়োগ ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ। বিনোয়োগকারীগণ প্রোসপেষ্টাস পড়ে এবং ঝুঁকির বিষয়গুলি সতর্কতার সাথে অনুধাবন করে নিজ নিজ আর্থিক অবস্থা ও



**IDLC Investments Limited** D R Tower (4th Floor), 65/2/2 Bir Protik Gazi Golam Dostogir Road Purana Paltan, Dhaka 1000

Telephone: 16409, +880-9609994352, Fax: +880-2-9571171, Website: www.idlc.com/investments

"Investment in capital market involves certain degree of risks. The investors are required to read the prospectus and risk factors carefully, assess their own financial conditions and risk taking ability before making their investment decisions."

	phone numbers, web addre	esses, e-mails, fax numbers ager and Underwriter
Issuer	Contact Person	Contact Number
Robi Axiata Limited 53 Gulshan South Avenue, Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212	Mohammed Shahedul Alam Chief Corporate and Regulatory Officer & Company Secretary	Tel: +88 02 9887146-48 Fax: +88 02 9885463 E-mail: shahed.alam@robi.com.bd Website: www.robi.com.bd/en
Manager to the Issue	Contact Person	Contact Number
IDLC Investments Limited D.R.Tower (4th Floor) 65/2/2 Bir Protik Gazi Golam Dostogir Road, Purana Paltan Dhaka 1000	Md. Monituzzaman, CFA Managing Director	Tel: 16409, +880-9609994352 Fax: +880-2-9571171 E-mail: mzaman@killc.com Website: www.idic.com/investments
Underwriters	Contact Person	Contact Number
BRAC EPL Investments Limited Medona Tower (Level 4) 28 Mohakhali C/A Dhaka 1213, Bangladesh	Deedarul Hug Khan Chief Executive Officer	Tel: +88 02 9849253, 9849291,9848038 Fax: +88 02 9849445 E-mail: deedarui@bracept.com Website:www.bracept.com/mestments/
ICB Capital Management Limited Green City Edge (5th & 6th Fionr) 89, Kakrall, Dhaka 1000	Shukla Das Chief Executive Officer	Tei: +88 02 8300555, 8300367 Fax: 58 02:8300396 E-mail: ceo@icmLcom.bd, icmibd@gmail.com Website: www.kml.com.bd/
IDLC investments Limited D R Tower (4th Floor) 65/2/2 Bir Protik Gazi Golam Dostogir Road, Purana Paltan Dhaka 1000	Md. Moninuzzaman, CFA Managing Director	Tet 16409, +880-9609994352 fax: +880-2-9571171 E-mail: mzaman@idlc.com Website: www.idlc.com/investments
	illability of the Full Prospec	
Issuer	Contact Person	Contact Number
Robi Axlata Limited 53 Guishan South Avenue, Guishan 1, Dhaka 1212	Mohammed Shahedul Alam Chief Corporate and Regulatory Officer & Company Secretary	Tel: +88 02 9887146-48 Fax: +88 02 9885463 E-mail: shahed alamprobi.com.bd Website: www.robi.com.bd/en
Manager to the Issue	Contact Person	Contact Number

Gushan I, Dhaka 1212	Officer & Company Secretary	Website: www.robi.com.bd/en
Manager to the Issue	Contact Person	Contact Number
IDLC Investments Limited D R Tower (4th Floor) 65/2/2 Bir Protik Gazi Golam Dostogir Fload, Purana Paltan Dhaka 1000	Md. Moniruzzaman, CFA Managing Director	Tel: 16409, +880-9609994352 Fax: +880-2-9571171 E-malt mzaman@idlc.com Website: www.idlc.com/investments
Stock Exchanges	Contact Person	Contact Number
Dhaka Stock Exchange Limited DSE-Tower Plot # 46, Road # 21, Nikunja-2, Dhaka-1229	Md. Rabiul Islam Senior Manager Listing Affairs	Tel:+880-2-9564601, +880-2-9576210-18 Fax:+880-2-9567727, +880-2-9569755 Ernalt rabiul@dsebd.org Website: www.dsebd.org
Chittagong Stock Exchange Limited CSE Building, 1080, Sheikh Mujib Road Agrabad, Chiktagong 4100	Mohammad Monirul Haque Deputy General Manager Head of Listing	Tel: +880-31-720871-3, 714632-3 Fax: +880-31-714101 Emait monlingcse.com.bd Website: www.cse.com.bd

Name of the Credit Rating Company along with rating assigned with date of validity

Particulars	Entity	Long Term Loan	Short Term Loan
Rating	AA2	AA2(Lr)	ST-1
Rating Outlook	Stable		T.
Date of Rating	25 March 202	0	
Validity of Rating	31 March 202	1	
Rating By		redit Rating Agency of Bang	ladesh Limited

	Name of the Auditor	
Auditor	Contact Person	Contact Number
Hoda Vasi Chowdhury & Co. Chartered Accountants 8TMC 8haban (8th Floor) 7-9, Kawran Bazer, Dhaka 1215	A F Nesaruddin, FCA Senior Partner	Tel: +880-2-8121114, +8809120090 Fax: +880-2-8119298 E-mail: nesar@hodavasi.com Website: www.hodavasi.com

"श्रृंकिवाकारत्र विभिरग्नागं श्रृंकिशूर्ण। क्वानः ও वूर्या विभिरग्नागं कक्रमः"

"If you have any query about this document, you may consult the issuer, issue manager and underwriter

**"CONSENT OF THE BANGLADESH SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION** HAS BEEN OBTAINED TO THE ISSUE/OFFER OF THESE SECURITIES UNDER THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE ORDINANCE, 1969, AND THE BANGLADESH SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (PUBLIC ISSUE) RULES, 2015. IT MUST BE DISTINCTLY UNDERSTOOD THAT IN GIVING THIS CONSENT THE COMMISSION DOES NOT TAKE ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FINANCIAL SOUNDNESS OF THE ISSUER COMPANY, ANY OF ITS PROJECTS OR THE ISSUE PRICE OF ITS SECURITIES OR FOR THE CORRECTNESS OF ANY OF THE STATEMENTS MADE OR OPINION EXPRESSED WITH REGARD TO THEM. SUCH RESPONSIBILITY LIES WITH THE ISSUER, ITS DIRECTORS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MANAGING DIRECTOR,/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, COMPANY SECRETARY, ISSUE MANAGER, ISSUE MANAGER'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MANAGING DIRECTOR, UNDERWRITERS, AUDITOR(5) AND/OR VALUER, CREDIT RATING COMPANY (IF ANY).

#### Summary of Use of Proceeds of the Offer

Robi Axiata Limited will raise their capital through Initial Public Offering (IPO) for expansion of existing network However, details of the estimated cost for this expansion has been planned as under:

Particulars	Estimated Amount (BDT)
Network Expansion	5,157,723,574
Estimated IPO Expenses	80,209,766
Total	5,237,933,340

Registered and Corporate Office	Nafi Tower, 53 Gulshan South Avenue, Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212
	As-Salam Tower 13th Floor, 57 Agrabad C/A, Chattogram-4100
	Uday Tower, 57 & 57/A, Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan-1, Dhaka
	Chowdhury Plaza, Karimpur Road, Noakhali
	M M Plaza (2nd floor & basement) Rajshahi
	Holding No: 223/201, Joatola, Comilla
*Other Offices	Alo Bhaban, NS Road, Babar Ali Road, Kushtia
	Nasim Bhulyan Tower, 316 S S K Road, Feni-3900
	44, Dhaka Sylhet Road, Moulovi Bazar
	Sabur Khan Tower, 37 Kali Bari Road, Tangail
	Zillur Rahman Super Market , 2nd Floor, Bhairob
Contact Person	Mohammed Shahedul Alam Chief Corporate and Regulatory Officer & Company Secretary
Lead Banker for the IPO	Trust Bank Limited

#### Location of the Project

world has to offer to them.

Robi is a telecommunication service provider Company having its Corporate office in Gulshan 1, Dhaka and other onal offices in different districts of Bangladesh, Other than these offices we have 10 Mobile Switching Centre

#### Principal Products or Services of the Issuer

Along with Voice, data and SMS services, Robi Axiata Ltd. provides innovative digital solutions to the people across the country under two brands – Robi & Airtel. The brand Robi strives to ensure an integrated digital lifestyle options for the modern and progressive individuals

by facilitating the access to a world of opportunities. With its advanced technology and superior network, life enhancing digital solutions and relevant partnerships, Robi focuses on delivering relevant innovation to the people of Bangladesh. Airtel brand on the other hand exists to provide the youth of today a social digital lifestyle enabling them to discover more with friends. With Airtel's superior network, youth relevant services, content and competitive pricing, the brand enables the youth to capture precious moments, share experiences and learn about what the

In addition to the core mobile voice services, Robi Axiata offers data services over 3G universal mobile telecommunications service (IJMTS) and 4G long term evolution (I,TE) network, short messaging services (SMS), diverse range of value-added services (VAS) and advanced digital and IoT solutions. Its services are available both on pre-paid and post-paid platforms.

#### Names of Associates, Subsidiary/related and Holding Company of Issuer Robi Axiata Limited (Robi) is a subsidiary company of Axiata Investments (Labuan) Ltd, an investment holding

company of Axiata Group Berhad of Malaysia. Robi Axiata Limited has incorporated "RedDot Digital Limited", a wholly owned subsidiary in November 2019. RedDot Digital is registered in the Bangabandhu Hi-Tech City, Kallakoir, Gazipur, Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park

Authority (BHTPA) has granted lease of land in Bangabandhu Hi-Tech City, Kaliakoir and Sheikh Hasina Software

The subsidiary will focus on Hi-Tech/ IT/ITES (IT Enabled Services) sector, developing software technology for mobile, IoT and FinTech services, The subsidiary will also facilitate data centre, incubation centre and R&D etc. It started its commercial operations in 2020.

A) Statement of assets and liabilities					In BD
	E		As at 31 December		
Particulars	2019	2018	2017	2016 (Restated)	2015
ASSETS					
Property, plant and equipment (PPE), net ritangible assets, net Sight-of-use asset (ROU), net Deferred tax assets rivestment in associate rivestment in subsidiary	100,540,016 23,862,427 26,913,067 3,031,595	99,182,172 29,451,908 1,586,415	91,128,128 30,197,719 463,740 3,509,437	78,739,616 34,260,865 - 6,394,854	62,897,261 23,176,469 6,394,854
ion-current assets	154,347,105	130,220,495	125,299,024	119,395,335	92,468,584
eventories accounts and other receivables, net ong term receivables - current portion dvances, deposits and prepayments hort term investments - FDRs ash and cash equivalents	244,409 7,932,397 4,574,123 353,580 4,517,026	282,680 7,121,048 3,992,642 352,982 2,644,237	210,834 9,743,805 5,122,121 1,725,366	132,512 8,088,082 1,791,959 4,014,306	87,555 4,398,909 241 2,456,814 1,837,130
urrent assets	17,621,535	14,393,589	16,802,126	14,026,859	8,780,649
otal assets	171,968,640	144,614,084	142,101,150	133,422,194	101,249,233
QUITY AND LIABILITIES					
haré capital other reserves etained earnings	47,141,400 6,662,397 5,785,098	47,141,400 6,662,397 6,787,836	47,141,400 6,662,397 4,867,025	47,141,400 6,662,397 4,873,409	35,356,050 11,804,482
quity	59,588,895	60,591,633	58,670,822	58,677,206	47,160,532
nterest bearing term loans isset retirement obligation imployee benefits ease obligation their non-current flability beferred fax liabilities	7,226,995 374,326 363,370 30,744,041 3,698,061	11,154,106 364,506 227,648 452,629 3,497,283	8,094,034 429,151 142,785 3,173,865	10,657,332 546,802 1,931,553 3,812,453	3,859,199 7,718 13,490,847
ion-current liabilities	42,406,793	15,696,172	11,839,835	16,948,140	17,357,764
Accounts and other payables furrent tax liabilities intercompany payables - edotco BD netercompany payables - Avista Group Berhad ubscribers - socurity deposit cesse obligation interest bearing berm loans thort term loan regold against employee share purchase plan (ISPP)	41,287,549 5,914,240 3,625,991 1,589,965 245,402 1,766,583 6,832,441 7,350,000 1,360,781	38,458,287 4,035,215 5,307,219 1,854,402 241,440 57,701 4,959,194 13,412,821	40,941,807 3,745,957 3,012,166 1,801,542 249,021 3,140,000 18,700,000	29,328,596 4,124,823 443,712 1,687,083 307,717 2,687,165 19,217,750	19,828,837 4,465,153 197,779 1,681,913 132,693 3,149 2,921,413 7,500,000
Current liabilities	69,972,952	68,326,279	71,590,493	57,796,848	36,730,937
fotal liabilities	112,379,745	84,022,451	83,430,328	74,744,988	54,088,701
otal equity and liabilities	171,968,640	144,614,084	142,101,150	133,422,194	101,249,233

Date: 16 February 2020					5d/- Chowdhury & Co ed Accountants
(B) Statement of profit or loss and other	comprehensive income				In 8DT 000
Section (Section )		Fo	r the year ended 31 Decemb	per	
Particulars	2019	2018	2017	2016 (Restated)	2015
Revenue Cost of revenue Administrative expenses Seiling & distribution expenses Operating expenses	74,811,748 (46,973,632) (4,368,878) (10,700,576) (4,109,806)	67,982,295 (48,063,015) (3,964,060) (12,441,864) (4,129,417)	68,255,508 (52,829,470) (3,262,468) (11,320,395) (3,659,381)	51,131,424 (45,566,581) (2,907,782) (7,454,488) (3,757,931)	51,627,724 (33,523,973) (2,455,627) (7,465,152) (3,359,356)
Profit/ (loss) from operations	8,658,856	(616,061)	(2,816,206)	(8,555,358)	4,823,616
Share of profit from associate Gain relating to disposal of draws in edotor 8D Net finance expenses Foreign exchange gain/(loss) Non-operating income/(expenses)	(5,054,825) (167,058) 541,484	245,016 6,307,547 (2,971,050) (182,075) 30,268	306,089 1,777,770 (1,326,377) (677,398) 164,427	(809,348) 24,001 (91,961)	(485,540) 143,998 522,200
Net profit/ (loss) before WPPF Expense related to WPPF and welfare fund	3,978,457 (189,450)	2,813,645 (133,983)	(2,571,696)	(9,432,666)	5,004,274 (250,214)
Net profit/ (loss) before tax	3,789,007	2,679,662	(2,571,696)	(9,432,666)	4,754,060
Tax expenses:	III III III III III III III III III II				
Current tax expense Deferred tax income/ (expense)	(2,916,206) (703,712)	(1,190,402) 658,081	(566,768) 3,033,880	(470,308) 2,971,901	(1,415,890) (935,944)
Net profit/ (loss) after tax	169,089	2,147,341	(104,584)	(6,931,073)	2,402,226
Other comprehensive income/ (expense)					
items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss: Actuarial gain/ (loss) from defined benefit plan Related taxes	194,900 (107,604)	(53,980)	98,200		
Other comprehensive income/ (expense) for the year	87,296	(53,980)	98,200		
Total comprehensive income/ (expense) for the year	256,385	2,093,361	(6,384)	(6,931,073)	2,402,226
Profit/ (loss) attributable to:					
Equityholders of the Company	169,089	2,147,341	(104,584)	(6,931,073)	2,402,226
AND THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPER	169,089	2,147,341	(104,584)	(6,931,073)	2,402,226
Total comprehensive income/(expense) attributable to:	A STATE OF THE PARTY OF T	- CONTRACTOR	SH5H0MXXXXXX	Joynead Sales	TATAL STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE
Equityholders of the Company	256,385	2,093,361	(6,384)	(6,931,073)	2,402,226
-2.0	256,385	2,093,361	(6,384)	(6,931,073)	2,402,226
Basic Earnings per share (EPS) for the year	0.04	0.46	(0.02)	(1.88)	0.68
Date: 16 February 2020					541-

8 60 87		For	the year ended 31 December	er	
Particulars	2019	2018	2017	2016 (Restated)	2015
ash flows from operating activities:		11.0			
ash received from customers ash paid to suppliers, employees and others	84,274,539 (36,096,707)	74,621,546 (36,659,238)	68,149,445 (36,152,002)	55,822,527 (34,412,450)	54,885,554 (28,433,861)
ash generated from operations Tanttax paid	48,177,832 (19,417,400)	37,962,308 (15,883,208)	31,997,443 (17,761,541)	21,410,077 (9,077,739)	26,451,693 (9,459,563)
let cash from operating activities Cash flows from investing activities:	28,760,432	22,079,100	14,235,902	12,332,338	16,992,130
capidition of angenty, plant and equipment and intergibles moveds from side of property, plant and equipment. I gyment for lock instability and 6d interior interest and insurance claim received rocceds from side in deform 8D visions concept from side in deform 8D visions con repayment from (to) electro 8D capitation of Carl At housests combination and the side of the	(13,480,013) 76,266 67,437	(23,418,818) 28,967 (3,988,295) 110,339 10,062,000	(20,514,980) 2,694,721 158,876 4,969,276 740,875	(20,299,731) 532,768 112,490 	(21,776,854) 6,224,297 123,761 (4,448,027)
let cash used in investing activities	(13,334,308)	(17,205,807)	(11,951,232)	(18.860.885)	(19,876,823)
Cash flows from financing activities: Deposit against ESPP including interest froceeds from loars and borrowings syment of lease obligation tepsayment of loars and borrowings referest paid Jividends paid	1,360,781 24,180,305 (4,907,911) (34,286,510)	54,562,821 (14,542) (58,153,322)	35,820,000 (40,393,610)	46,132,750 (3,149) (36,564,611) (859,267)	8,341,000 (7,004) (3,982,718) (789,033) (1,502,632)
et cash flows from/ (used in) financing activities	(13,553,335)	(3,605,043)	(4,573,610)	8,705,723	2,059,613
et change in cash and cash equivalents shand cash equivalents as at 1 January*	1,872,789 2,644,237	1,268,250 1,375,987	(2,288,940) 4,014,306	2,177,176 1,837,130	(825,080) 2,662,210
ash and cash equivalents as at 31 December	4,517,026	2,644,237	1,725,366	4.014,306	1,837,130

Date: 16 February 2020

Leverages
The Company has destance cash dissistent (a) 4% for the year ended on 31 December 2014 and paid the same in 2015. The Company has not declared any dissioned for the years ended on 31 December 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019.

E Rold Asiata Limited ("the Company I is a public company limited by share and deniceled in Basigloichs. The address of the Company's registered offer is a fall flower (19 Hoor), 31 Guiltian South Remain, Guiltian—1, Ohuka 1217, Bergloichs. The Company was Remed and incorporated with the Regulator of 1000 Back Companies and firms in Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and firms in Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm State Rangalogist in 2015 such England and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companies and Firm Rangalogist in 2015 sucher 1000 State Companie

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Date: 16 February 2020					Hoda Vasi Chowdhury & Co Chartered Accountants
		NAV and EPS for the	last five years		
Particulars	2019	2018	2017	2016 (Restated)	2015
Net Asset Value (NAV) per share	12.64	12.89	12.45	12.45	13.34
Earnings Per Share (EPS)	0.04	0.46	(0.02)	(1.88)	9.68

	2017	2016 (Restated)	2015
12.85	12.45	12.45	13.34
0.46	(0.02)	(1.88)	9.68
	35377		

Robi Axiata Limited Auditors' certificate regarding calculation of EPS and other ratios We have examined the following ratios of Robi Axiata Limited (hereinsther referred to We have examined the following ratios of Robi Axiata Limited thereinafter referred to as "the Company") for the years ended from 2015 to 2019.

Based on the audited financial statements for the years ended 31 December 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016 and 2015, we certify that the Company has properly calculated the following ratios using stated principles on the basis of audited financial statements:

2017 2019 2018 2016 2015 rrent ratio (Times) 0.24 Currents Liabilities Current Assets - Closing In 0.24 Quick ratio (Times) 0.25 0.21 0.23 0.24 0.24 Current Liabilities 16.38 12.42 11.43 10.71 13.24 rentary turnover ratio (Times) 47.69 Asset turnover ratio (Times) 0.47 0.47 0.50 0.44 0.51 Average Total Assets 37.21% 29,30% 35.07% Operating profit 16,73% 11.57% perating profit ratio (%) -0.91% 9.34% Revenue Net Profit after Tax -13.56% 0.23% Net profit ratio after tax (%) 3.16% 4.65% Net Revenue Net Profit after Tax leturn on assets ratio (%) 1.50% 2.38% -13.10% Return on equity ratio (%) 0.28% 3,60% 5,21% Average Shareholders' Equ Net Profit Attributable to Share arning per share (BDT) of the Company 0.04 0.46 (0.02) (1.88) 83.0 Weighted Average No. of Ordinary Shares EBITDA 27.71% 12.55% 38.85% 33.82% 21,02% 0.14 Debt to total assets ratio (Times) 0.31 0.21 0.21 0.24 Total Debt 0.55 0.30 bt to equity ratio (Times) 0.51 Operating Profit + Others Income 1.92 me interest earned ratio (Times) 1,77 (0.80)8,12 (8.54)Debt service coverage ratio (Times) 0.78 (0.10)(0.67) (2.20) 1.15 6.10 Net operating cash flow per share (BDT) 3.02 Net operating cash flow per share/ EPS (BDT) Net Operating Cash Flow per Share (151.00)

As a result of implementation of new provision of IFRS 16 "Leases", the solvency ratios are different for 2019 and hence not comparable on same criteria for rest of the years i.e. 2015 to 2018 Ratios pertinent to the prospectus are in pursuant to rule 4 (1) (d) /Annexure D of Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (Public Issue) Rules, 2015 and subsequent amendments made thereafter.

Name, address and short description of each of the Directors Dato' Mohd Izzaddin Bin Idris Choirman (Nominated by Axiata Investments (Labuan) Limited) Address: Axiata Tower, 9 JalanStesen, Sentral S, Kuala Lumpur Sentral, 50470 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Dato' Model Ezzadán látis was appointed to the Board on 30 January 2019. Formerly, Ezzadán was the Group Managing Director/Dief Executive Officer of UEM Group Berhald, a position he held since July 2009 until Distober 2018. izzodón has over 20 yean of experience in the fields of investment banking, financial and general management having served in various serior positions a Malaysian international Menthare Banken Berhad, Malaysian Resources Corporation Denhad and southern Bank Berhad. Izzodón is a Fellow of Chartere Public Accountants (CRN) from Australia.

He holds a Bunkels of Commerce degree (Hist Class Hones in Finance) from the University of New South Wales, Australia. Izzaddin is also the member of the Mulsysian Institute of Accountants (MAA). Izzaddin is re-designated to Executive Director/Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer on 24 January 2020,

No. Shridish' Sariputta Hansa Wijayasuriya

Director (Kominated by Akida Investments (Labuan) Limited:
Address: Anista Tower, 9 Jaland Stesen, Sentral S, Kuale Lumpur Sentral, 50470 Kuale Lumpur, Melaysia

D: Has Wijayasuriya wax appointed to the Board on 26 April 2016, in his capacity at the Regional CEO for South Asia, Dx Wijayasuriya heals the South Asia Copesitions of the Acida Group, D Wijayasuriya additionally functions and the Group Dreft Sentitive of Dailog Asiata PLL in Sri Lania, a subsidiary of the Asiata Group and the canady Islandish and Copesitions of the Acida Group, D Wijayasuriya additionally functions and the Group Dreft Sentitive of Dailog Asiata PLL in Sri Lania, a subsidiary of the Asiata Group and the canady Islandish PLL in Sri Lania, a subsidiary of the Asiata Group and the canady Islandish PLL in Sri Lania.

account on the Charlest School Control of the Charlest School Control Dr. Wijspausrija is a past Chalman of GSM Asia Pacific — the regional interest group of the ESM Association representing 22 Asia Pacific and services on the Board of the TM forum. The CSM Association honoured Dr. Wijspausrige with the "Dutstanding Centribution to Asian Mobilithe highest borous at the Asia Mobilithe Association."

Vivek Socid
Director (Nominated by Axiota Investments (Labuan) Limited;
Address: Axiota Tower, 9 Jalan Stesen, Sentral 5, Kuala Lumpur Sentral, 50470 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Mr. Week Sood was appointed to the Board on 3 May 2017, Week is the Group Chief Financial Officer of Axiata Geoup Berhad. Week is also a member of the company 2 Board Audit Committee. the holds a Sudderlar in Commonce and Securic a Qualified Chartered Assurrant of India in 1989. He conducted his Accountancy and Audit Triabiling in Incommissional, Prior to joining Asiata, Virels lad a number of multidisciplinary and multi-cultural team as EVP and Group Chile Marketing Officer of clessors, CEG of Commensphore Europicators, CEG of Elemon 1986, CEG of Elemon 1986, and 2010 Officer of of Elea ALM the Instance.

He has played the rule of change agent through leading the transformation of a large telos, in becoming a Digital Service provider and developing new services over and above the connectivity layer. The galeed driverse global knowledge through his responsibilities across failum and European mankers, leading teams from multiple cultures and backgrounds.

Make I September 1 (Singapore) Pte, Limited)
Director (Nominated by Bharti International (Singapore) Pte, Limited)
Director (Nominated by Bharti International (Singapore) Pte, Limited)
Address: Airtel Center, Plot No. 16, Udyog/Vihar, Phase IV, Gurgaon, Haryana, India
Sahai Sehgai wa appointed as the Director in the Robi Seard of Directors impresenting Bharti International (Singapor
2017). Natura is also serving as a member of the Robi Seard Addit Centrition.

Natur is a global professoral having worked in three continents and held key positions within the financial and commercial areas of international business operations in conseguing and advanced markets. He has held board positives in companies of the Telenor Group. He has also been a havin loader in assurance and business advanced years of the telenor Group. He has also been a havin loader in assurance and business advancely services for any enablishment of market flowers within telecom, technology, entail, real-estate, manufacturing and financial services industries advancing and assisting in US GAAR IRRS and SEC requirements. Naked is a Chartened Accountant and has och experience of over 17 years, with the last 9 years being in the Telenor Group. During his career with Telenors, Nakes has performed in several rates specials or multiple prographies in India, Central Eastern Europe and most recently in Malaysia where he was the Chief Francial Other of Digit, can be indeed (55 fallow market cup).

He was furnishy the Old Financial Officer of Science Hungary ownsering all financial matters and was responsible for establishing and executing on the company's strategy and the Enterprise Risk Management efforts. During his stirit as the EFO for Science Hungary, Nahal also acted as the Crief Marketing Officer for 6 months and was instrumental in launching a new product portfalse which was critical in turning around the operational performance of the company. Nakul is a Chartered Accountant who holds a Mosters of Accounting and Finance from the Institute of Chartered Accountants, India, and a Bachelor of Commerce from Delhi University, India.

Randeep Singh Sekhon
Director (Nominated by Bhart) International (Singapore) Pte. Limited)
Address: Airted Center, Plot No. 16, UdyogVilhar, Phase IV, Gurgaon, Haryana, India
Randeep Singh Sekhon was appaired to the Sound of Roi: Asiata Limited on the 21st of October, 2015, it is currently serving as the Osel Technology Officer for
Airtel India and South Joss. Readquartered in New Dath, India, the company ranks among the top three mobile servine provider globally in terms of statisfiers.

Airtel India and South Joss. Readquartered in New Dath, India, the company ranks among the top three mobile servine provider globally in terms of statisfiers. in India, the company's product offerings include 26, 3G and 4G wireless services, mobile commerce, fixed line services, high spend home broadband, DTH, enterprise services including positional & international long-distance services to carriers.

Racdeep is responsible for diming technology strategy and innovation, digitization, network operations, relicus, planning and quality assumers.
Prior to this, Randeep was the CED of Hustricon Tri Indonesia based out of Jakarta. He aucreshally drove customer contribity and digitization led efficiency and business transformation for three companies in indonesia. Not Randeep lass over 28 years of experience. Thayaparan 5 Sangarapillai

Thays Sargara Pillal was appointed to Noti Assists Limited Board of Birectors on 1 July 2015. He is the Chairman of the Congrany's Board Risk and Compileon Committies and also mention of Board Assist Committee. They had his accountancy basising in London and qualified as a Chartered Association in 1982 and So cometty a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Association is England and William.

He is also a member of the Malaysian Institute of Cestified Public Accountants and the Malaysian Institute of Accountants. Theye has over 30 years of operiores in providing such and purioses solvinary services in clients in a wide range of industries. His particular of clients include major guidic listed companies involved in power, beforeormunications, automative, property development and manufacturing section.

Thays has abe led cross-border assignments. Other than statutory audits, Thays has led numerous assignments on financial due ciligences, mergers and acquisitions, initial public offerings, finance function effectiveness and other adminey work. He joined Price/Materiboure Coopers (PwC) in Kuda Lumpur in 1988. He was a spatrer in the Assurance Services of PwC Malaysia from 1994 and retired as a senior partner in 2015.

Klaus Milchael Kuchmer

Modes methoder instruction of the Committee of the Commit Missael in a globally occurregished commercial leader able to deliver organizational stability and success in the telecommunications and technological advances, capable of norming assured dysfunctional organizations with contemporar

He was the Hoad of Region, Nobia Siemens Network ("USA"), India form 2007 to 2009 and the Hoad of Sub-region NSN Japan-Nome in 2007. Prior thereto, Michae was the Managing Director of Siemens Public Communication Retworks 11d, India from 2005 to 2007 and Sensor Vice President, Siemens Malaysia from 2002 to 2005. In addition to the above, Michael's Board experience is enteroise, and distrib with Robi Asiata, e.Ex Group, ISSN India, Jugan & Korea, and Cazan Nethenrisk of elementation that the is well solved to sorioir residur and sorrioir privident decommunication retex, and board and Advisory positions in IT, Rodnoslogs, and Services Cognisiosation requiring high-calibor contemporary involved high selection decisionality of decisionality.

Mahtab Uddin Ahmed Managing Director and CEO (Nominated by Axiata investments (Labua Address: Nafi Tower, 53 Gulshan South Avenue, Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212 Mattab became the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Securitive Officer of Robi Addiz Limited on Revember 1, 2016. He is Robin first homegrown CEO.
Mattab is in charge of transforming Robi into a next-generation digital company, in addition to his current rule as Robin MD and CEO, he is also serving as a Director is Nepal's number one mobile phone operator, Nortl PM. Ltd.

Ministry (size Robi in September 2010 as the Chief Financial Officer (CIO) and held the position stil 2014. He was then appointed as the Chief Operating Officer (CIO) of holds from April 2014 to March 2016. Seleve joining Robi, Markato spent 17 years of his coree with Uniferer where he held various business and finance leadership positions including the post of Finance Director, Group Financial Controller in various operating companies like Uniferer Pakistan An alumnus of Harvard Business School, Mahtab CGMA of Chartered Institute of Management Acc rent Accountants (CMA, UK).

Multiplis currently the President of the Association of Mobile Tolerant Operators of Europaiesh (AMTOB) and an operator committee member of the Foreign Invest Chamber of Comments and Industry (FICC). Multiple is also a member of National Council of Profit at a Chamber of Contracts and Management Accountant of Europidesh (CMAII). Public Issue Application Process

Step-1 (Applicant)

publication of abridged version of prospectus.

The application for a process of prospectus in the process of (b) Non-resident Bangladesh (NRS) and Foreign applicants shall submit bank drafts (FDD), insured in favor of the Soure for an an application more; with their prefix stee to the convened Stock broker/Merchant Banker, A Non-resident Bandadesh (NRS)

application manage, with their application to the conserved Stock broker-Menchant Basker. A Non-resident Bangladeshi (MRI) and Turrigin application may also shorth a sample data application (CDT) and application mode by Nimther, a.o. one in Number on name and the their painty with a person. The dark (FDD) shall be issued by the Bask where the applicant minimizers fromign Commany account desiring the same account and provided the customers with a cartification manneticining the FC account mannetic which has been desired for tissue the FDD. The application and also submit the certificate with his/her application. No baskers shall have made continued for the provided also submit the certificate with his/her application. No baskers shall have made continued to the provided continued to the same account mannetic with the troop don't from a maintained with the deposition of the certificate with his/her application and the source change application is expected to the source change application.

(C) Eligible investors shall submit application through the electronic subscription system of the exchange(s) and deposit the full amount intended to subscribe by the method as determined by the exchange(s).

(a) post the aneutr speakfely in the customer account (other than NSS and Foreiga applicants), and upon availability of fund, block the amount equivalents to the application maney.

(b) accountable of the application maney.

(c) accountable of the application produces the account of account the stream of the

Benier of the Stock broker/Merchant Bunker shall block the account as requested for, issue a certificate confirming the same and hundover it to the respective Stock broker/Merchant Bunker. For Non-resident Bangladeshi (MRII) and Freeign applicants, the Stock-broker/Merchant Banker shall prepare a list containing the bank draft (IDEO) information against the respective applicants particular.

The Stock broken/Nershamt flamine shall prepare category wine into all the applicants containing Contomer III, Name, 80 Account Number and Number of Securities applied for, and with 091 (three) washing days from the cat-off late; send to the respective Enchange, the Into of applicants in electronic (text Somat with 1864 "-- Separating forms, the certificate) (such by this have, the duffs and occurrent to the some security of the lost containing the back draft (1959) information. On the next working day, the Exchanges shall puncke the lower with the information received from the Stock broker/Merchant Bankers, the bank drafts (160) and certificates submitted by live-resident Banglacets (NRII) and foreign applicants and the lost centulning the bank draft (190) information. Extension Shall preserve the brainer's critificates in their custody.
I. The application/boy instructions shall be preserved by the Stock besize/Merchant Bankers up to 6 moreties from listing of the securities with exchange.

11. After receiving wriffication report and infernation from CDE, the issues shall southine the applications, prepare category wise consolidated loss of valid and invalid applications and about report of first distant of subscription to the Commission and the Escharges within 10 (ten) warking days from the date of receiving information from the Escharges. 12. The insuer and the issue manager shall conduct category wise lattery with the valid applications within 63 (three) working days from the date of reporting to the Commission and the Exchanges, if they do not receive any observation from the Commission or the Exchanges.

Provided that IPO lattery shall be conducted on the lorened digital platform made by any of the following imitiations under the supervision of Central Repository Banglacesh Limited (CRBL).

(1) Survey of Reneath Parties and Georgiatrians (BTRC), BEET;

(1) Computer Science Department, Shaks University; and

(ii) Banglacesh Computer Science. Hope the Computer Science Science (BTRC), BEET;

The house and issue manager shall assarine posting the lottery result on their websites within 06 (six) hours and on the websites of the Commission and Sixhanges within 12 (twelve) hours of lottery. 14. Within 02 (two) working days of conducting lottery, the issuer shall: (a) send undergry wise lists of the successful and unsuccessful applicants in electronic (text format with tide? "-' separator) format to the respective Debange.

(c) issue alletment letters in the names of successful applicants in electronic format with digital signatures and send those to respective Enchange in electronic form. (d) send consolidated all street data (BOOs and number of securities) in electronic text format in a COROM to CRBL to credit the abotted shares to the respective 80 accounts.

15. On the next working day, the Exchanges shall distribute the information and allotment letters to the Stock broker/Merchant Bankers concerned in

(a) senit the amount of successful (other than MRS and fineign) applicants to the Issaer's respective Escrive Account opered for subscription purpose, and unblock the amount of unsuccessful applicants; (b) send the penalty amount of other than WBI and Foreign applicants, who are subject to penal provisions, to the Issuer's respective Excrow Accounts along with a list and unblock the balance application money.
On the next working day, the Exhances shall distribute the information and all convent letters to the Sock broker/Merchant Bankers concerned in electronic format and instruct them to:

release the amount blocked for unaccessful (other than NRB and foreign) applica (ii) month the ambient occurring excessful applicants and the penulty amount of uncurring applicants (other than NRII and florings), who are subject to penul provisions, to the respective "Examinations of the floure opposed for subscription purpose."

The the next working day of more/way request from the Stockhorkers/Marchael Barkers, their bankers shall unblock the amount blocked in the accounts and event the amount all countries of the bissers' Scores' accounts.

accounts after rest care arrangement and the state of the state of the state of the continuer accounts, inform the succeeding application money blocked in the custamer accounts, inform the succeeding applicants about allotment of sounders and the unsocceeding applicants about arisesing their blocked amounts and send discussments to the inchange evidencing details of the emittainer made to the respective "Sorrow" assumes of the base. The unbidded amounts and several applicants shall be placed as por whether instructions. The Stoke brisker/Merrial Ensiers shall be entitled by account the white shall change, if any, from the applicant who wants to withdraw the application money, up to an amount of Tis. S.00 (five) per withdrawal.

19. All bank drafts (#30) infamiliated by NBS or Fareign applicants shall be deposited in the Issuer's expective Tsoow's accounts and refund shall be made by the Issuer by refund warrants through concerned studenties for methant banks or transfer to the applicant's bank account if if account which has been debited to apply by NBS or Federica applicants! I brough banking channel within 10 floors working days from the date of interest.

The Issues, Issue Manager(s), Stock brokers, Merchant Bankers and the Exchanges shall ensure compliance of the a 21. The bank drafts (FDD) shall be issued considering TT Clean exchange rate of Sonali Bank Ltd. on the date of publication of abridged version of prospectus

 Amount deposited and blocked in the "Public Issue Application Account" shall not be withdrawn or transferred during the blocking period. Amount deposited by the applicants shall not be used by the Stock brokers/Merchant Bankers for any purpose other than public issue application. 23. The issuer shall pay the cods related to data transmission, if claimed by the Exchange concerned up to an amount of Tk.2,00,000.00 (take two lac) for a

24. The Stock twices/Merchant Bunkers shall be entitled to a service charge of its 5.00 (take five) only per application irrespective of the amount or category. The service charge shall be paid by the applicant at the time of submitting application. 25. The Stock broker/Merchant Bunker shall provide the issuer with a statement of the remittance and bank drafts (FDG) sent

The house shall accumulate the penalty amount recovered and send it to the Commission through a bank draft/payment order issued in Savor of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission.

The concerned Exchange are authorized to settle any complaints and take necessary actions against any Stockbroker/Merchant Banker in case of viol
of any provision of the public issue application process with intimation to the Commission.

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**/HAT TO WATCH** 

FACEBOOK
LA LIGA
Villarreal v Valencia
Live from 8:00pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE Hyderabad v Kolkata Live from 4:00pm Mumbai v Punjab Live from 8:00pm STAR SPORTS SELECT 2 PREMIER LEAGUE Tottenham v West Ham Live from 9:30pm Leicester v Aston Villa
Live from 12:15am
(Monday)
TEN 2 SERIE A
Roma v Benevento
Live from 12:45am
(Monday)

## No-nonsense Afif leads batsmen's resistance

SPORTS REPORTER



Cup and more talk of rust, all eyes were on the batsmen. Ahead of the tournament, selectors stated they would keep a close eye on the attitude and approach of the players regardless of their score and perhaps they will be impressed to see someone like Afif Hossain finally stepping up.

Rated as one of the cricketers with the most potential, Afif was unable to make an impression in his first two games, scoring just four and 15. Finally, the 21-year-old, who has already made his international debut in the limited-overs format, showed his class and played a magnificent 98-run knock.

It was yet again a pressure situation for Najmul XI, who found themselves struggling on 31 for three after being sent in to bat. That is when the left-hander strode onto the crease to join Mushfiqur Rahim, who followed up his century in his last outing with a half-century.

The duo added a magnificent 147-run fourth-wicket stand and, coupled with left-hander Irfan Shukkur's quick 48, Najmul XI posted a challenging total of 264 for 8 in fifty overs.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Known for his electrifying presence, Afif took no time to get settled and kept pushing for cheeky singles. The pair gradually started to accelerate, with young Afif assuming the role of the aggressor and caught the eye with his stroke-making ability.

There was also concern about inside out drive to the boundary

Known for his electrifying throwing wickets away after being seence, Afif took no time to t settled and kept pushing for eeky singles. The pair gradually score big.

His hand-eye coordination and good use of feet made life difficult for the bowlers and he reached his 50 off 69 balls with a gorgeous inside out drive to the boundary

off off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz.

At the other end, Mushfiqur took his time despite being in brilliant touch as Afif took bowlers all over the ground.

The left-hander calmed after reaching his fifty and paced his innings well in the middle overs, rotating the strike every now and then.

But after getting into the seventies, Afif once again started to put pressure on the bowlers without taking any extra risks and employing proper cricketing strokes. His classical cover drive for a boundary to pacer Sumon Khan off the full face of the bat was perhaps the shot of the day.

He then took Mahmudullah Riyad for a six over deep midwicket, followed by a boundary to reach his nineties.

But, as in the previous game, Mushfiqur was involved in some miscommunication while taking a quick single and Afif's knock ended two runs shy of a well-deserved century.

#### **SCORES IN BRIEF**

NAJMUL XI: 264 for 8 in 50 overs (Mushfiqur 52, Afif 98, Irfaan 48 not out; Ebadat 2-60, Rubel-3-53).

MAHMUDULLAH XI: 133 all out in 32.1

overs (Nurul 28 not out; Nasum 3-23, Rahi 3-34, Rishad 2-26) **Result:** Najmul XI won by 131 runs.



Dominic Calvert-Lewin continued his sublime run of form, scoring late into the Merseyside Derby to ensure a point for Everton yesterday. He is the leading scorer in Europe's top five leagues with 10 goals from seven games.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Dominic denies Reds

AGENCIES

Premier Liverpool were foiled by VAR as they were held to a 2-2 Premier League derby

draw with Everton at Goodison Park on Saturday after a late effort from Jordan Henderson was ruled out.

The champions were humiliated 7-2 by Aston Villa just before the break but they quickly set about putting things right when Sadio Mane scored in the third minute. Liverpool suffered a blow, though, eight minutes later when defender Virgil van Dijk went off injured after a reckless challenge from Everton keeper Jordan Pickford.

Everton took advantage of the Dutchman's absence, when, from a corner, Michael Keane rose at the near post to power a header past Adrian

post to power a header past Adrian.

Liverpool were on top for long stretches

and Mohamed Salah restored their lead in the 72nd minute, pouncing on a headed clearance from Yerry Mina and drilling a drive past Pickford.

But Everton, determined not to lose their unbeaten record, got back on level terms when James Rodriguez sent Lucas Digne down the left and his perfectly floated cross was headed home by the leaping Dominic Calvert-Lewin. Liverpool thought they had won the game in stoppage time through Henderson but VAR ruled that Mane had been narrowly offside and the goal was chalked off.

"The performance was top. It was a good game from both teams. The Henderson goal, I didn't see offside, but maybe somebody can explain it to me. Should we have three points? Maybe but we cannot change it," Jürgen Klopp said in a grim mood.

### 'Don't do that again'

AGENCIES

"Don't do that again,"
Mumbai Indians head coach
Mahela Jayawardene told
Quinton de Kock after the
South African went out to
bat in his training apparel,
and was seen pulling his
match jersey down over an
orange jersey, which he had
forgot to change out of

forgot to change out of.

De Kock was adjudged
man of the match for his
44-ball 78 as Mumbai
Indians comprehensively
beat Kolkata Knight Riders
on Friday, but there was
one thing he did which
made some Mumbai
Indians personnel 'go nuts',
said Mumbai head coach
Jayawardene after the match.

As De Kock and Rohit Sharma were seen walking out to bat in the chase, the South African was seen suddenly rushing back towards the dugout. However, with time possibly being a constraint, he was then seen making his way back to join Rohit again, adjusting his match jersey to conceal an orange band that was showing.

Rohit Sharma, waiting and watching his opening partner's discomfiture, burst out in laughter.

# A STADIUM INDEED!

The Rangpur Stadium has been in shambolic state for quite a while now. Built in 1968 near Islampur, the stadium which used to stage both football and cricket matches has now been left to rot due to a lack of maintenance and renovation. The ground and the gallery have become breeding grounds for shrubs while the premises have developed massive holes, posing a danger to anyone venturing into the area. A year ago, talks had initiated over converting the venue into an international standard stadium and a meeting was held in this regard with the participation of the city mayor, but talks did not progress. A part of the stadium was declared abandoned five years ago, but no renovation or reconstruction has taken place since. The National Sports Council is the owner of the stadium while the District Sports Association is the authority in charge of managing and maintaining infrastructure. But it seems like no one is keen on either owning or maintaining the stadium, which could have been the centre of sporting activities of the northernmost division. When contacted, Monjur Ahmed Azad, vice-president of District Sports Association (DSA) in Rangpur, said: "The old part of the stadium was declared abandoned five years back. A new structure will be built after demolition of the old ones." Advocate Anwarul Islam, secretary of DSA in Rangpur, added: "The front part of the stadium already declared vulnerable. Its demolition to be started soon. Tender will be invited to build a 4-storey building there very soon. A proposal of the international stadium has already been sent to concern department for approval."



PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER





# We have so many options, says Jose

AGENCIES

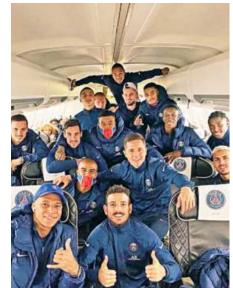
Gareth Bale is expected to make his second Tottenham debut against West Ham tonight, but Jose Mourinho claims even the Welsh star's place is not guaranteed as he revels in the squad depth at his disposal.

"We have a squad where every player has to fight a lot and play very well to deserve a place in the team," said Mourinho.

"The squad is so good, so strong. We have so many options that I refuse to say this player is a first choice. I can feel even in the players this feeling I love. They are happy but they are worried.

"They are happy that the squad is good, that people are coming to make the squad better. But they are worried about themselves, 'am I going to play?' This is the kind of feeling you have in the top teams and we are having that now."

Bale has plenty of experience of those demands from his time at Madrid, which is regarded as bittersweet despite winning 13 trophies.





## A VERY HAPPY RETURN

Kylian Mbappe's double strike confirmed that Paris St Germain would make a happy return to the capital ahead of their Champions League opener against Manchester United at the Parc des Princes. Le Parisiens left it late to wrap up a 4-0 win at 10-man Nimes on Friday and move top of the Ligue 1 standings. PSG, however, lacked Neymar's creative touch as he was rested for the trip south after returning from successful international duty for Brazil.

## PCB warns players for breaching protocols

REUTERS

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) warned players and officials of expulsion if they breach Covid-19 protocols after 12 people violated the "bio-secure bubble" at the ongoing National Twenty20 Cup in Rawalpindi.

Nine players and three officials tested negative for the new coronavirus after they were found to have spent time outside the bubble area near their hotel.

The people, identified as senior players and officials, received warnings and were made to pay for the tests.

"They have put at risk the integrity of the tournament and, health and safety of their colleagues," PCB director of high performance Nadeem Khan said in the statement.

# 'Nepal fixtures ideal use of FIFA window'

Sports Reporter



Football in the country came to a halt in the middle of March due to the pandemic and despite a resumption of camp in the first week of August, the postponement of World Cup qualifiers have kept footballers out of

the game for the last seven months.

With no other international assignment left for this year, the November FIFA window comes as an opportunity to improve rankings for Bangladesh, who languish at 187th position in world football. Nepal, ranked 170th, have had no football of

their own, too, during this period.

Despite the lack of preparation, BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag believes Nepal's consent to playing the two matches gives them an ideal

pportunity to use the FIFA window. "We want to utilise FIFA windows

"We want to utilise FIFA windows more and more and this is an ideal opportunity. If we can start preparation soon, there is enough time for the players to prepare for the matches. Furthermore, Nepal won't have an advantage as they have not stated training yet either," Shohag told The Daily Star yesterday.

The proposed matches will be held

The proposed matches will be held between November 11 and 19 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka and the BFF high-ups are eager to get the players back on the pitch. The BFF spokesman said that they would engage in talks with the foreign coaching staff today.

"We invited quite a few South Asian teams, including Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives, for two friendly matches in November about a month ago. Nepal have verbally corresponded to us about its government's green signal. So we will now start our preparations with a meeting with our national team coaches," BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag told The Daily Star yesterday.

According to an ANFA press release, Nepal team will start their preparation for the matches after the Dashain festival (Durga Puja), which ends on October 28.

Bangladesh coach Jamie Day was a bit concerned about the amount of time left for the two games, according to the BFF spokesman, but he said that the head coach and assistant coach, Stuart Watkiss, are eager to come to Bangladesh and start preparation.

"The two coaches will be there in the meeting and so will Paul Smalley (BFF's technical director). We will discuss all the aspects of preparation, including whether we will need to add a fitness trainer or any other personnel. And then after the meeting, we will have a series of meetings with government agencies regarding Nepal team's mode of arrival, state of health protocol, quarantine, practice facilities and access of spectators at

the venue," Shohag said.

The last time Bangladesh met Nepal was during the SAFF Championship in Dhaka in September 2018, with the home team suffering a 2-0 defeat.



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

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT SUITING & PARTY PARTY





## The mosque of harmony

Old common prayer site binds two villages of Bangladesh, India

S DILIP ROY

The Partition in 1947 could not keep them apart.

Inhabitants of two bordering villages in Bangladesh and India have co-existed in peace for decades now.

They have long-standing ties and a common site of prayer where they regularly gather to observe religious traditions and festivals.

It is an old mosque which is the root of such example-setting harmony between the people of the two countries,

The two-century-old mosque is located in Banshjani village under Bhurungamari upazila of Kurigram district, near the zero line of the northern Bangladesh-India border. The mosque's north side faces Jhakuatari village in Cooch Behar district of West Bengal in India.

People of both the villages offer their prayers at the semi-pucca mosque, which is built on around 15 decimals of land.

"Muslims of both villages come together in the mosque to offer prayers every day. After prayers, they exchange greetings. It is not possible to understand that they are citizens of different countries," said Nazrul Miah, 62, a resident of Banshjani and muazzin of the mosque.

Another Banshjani villager Jahangir Alam, 32, said, "People from different districts of both Bangladesh and India come to visit our mosque to see our unique bond."

The mosque is particularly vibrant on Fridays as a large number of people from both villages come there to offer Juma prayers, said Abu Bakkar Siddique, 45, another villager. SEE PAGE 5 COL 2



An Indian citizen distributing Tabarak after prayers at Simanta Jam-e-Masjid beside sub-pillar 9 at Banshjani border of Kurigram's Bhurungmari upazila. The mosque hosts Muslims from either side of the border and is known for communal harmony in the locality. The photo was taken recently.

## Police hold anti-rape rallies across the country

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday countrywide rallies against rape and all sorts of violence against women in a bid to create public awareness.

rallies simultaneously at all the 6,912 police beats across the country at 10:00am, according to a press release sent by Sohel Rana, assistant inspector general of Police Headquarters, yesterday.

Civil society representatives, and children rights activists, esteemed locals, school and college students took part in the programmes.

The participants called on all sections of society to create mass awareness to prevent any kind of violence against women and children, including rape, and to stand by abused women and children, added the release.

The programmes of every police beat were broadcast on Facebook Live.

> gang-rape and SEE PAGE 5 COL 6



RIVALS STORM SWING STATES

## Biden focuses on pandemic in Michigan

Trump stumps in Florida, Georgia

MACON, United States

President Donald Trump fought Friday to recover from sinking election polls by campaigning with a hardline pitch to America's right wing, claiming at rallies in Florida and Georgia that his Democratic opponent Joe Biden would deliver communism and a "flood" of criminal immigrants.

While Trump put on a brave face, the fact that he was fighting at all for the two southern states he won four years ago illustrated how much ground he has to make up against Biden in the 15 days left until the election.

With his polls sliding and US Covid-19 infections spiking, Trump is focusing entirely on his core Republican base, in hopes that highly energized supporters will turn out in huge numbers.

In Ocala, Florida, the coronavirus was an afterthought.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

## **Greetings from Cuba, Chile**

October 18, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

CASTRO, ALLENDE GREET BANGABANDHU

President Allende of Chile and President Fidel Castro of Cuba expressed their good wishes to the people and the government of Bangladesh and high esteem for Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. This was stated by Ali Aksad, general secretary of Bangladesh Peace Council, who had arrived in Dhaka from Santiago after attending the World Peace Council Presidential Committee meeting.

President Allende expressed hope for growing friendship between Chile and Bangladesh. Fidel Castro, commenting on the emergence of Bangladesh said, "More and more progressive republics are emerging in the world map and Bangladesh is the latest example."



He also stressed on Cuba-Bangladesh friendship and expressed hope that Bangladesh would play her role in maintaining world

BANGLADESH VOTED TO UNESCO AGENDA

The general conference of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) votes today to include the admission of Bangladesh on its agenda. This virtually assures that Bangladesh will become the 130th member of the organisation when a membership vote will be taken tomorrow. China casts a negative ballot in today's agenda vote.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

## ISPs suspend shutdown for a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Internet service providers and cable operators postponed their decision to shut down their services across the country for three hours every day from today, for a week.

The Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB) and The Cable Operators Association of Bangladesh (COAB) took the decision after an emergency meeting with the Post and Telecommunications Minister Mustafa Jabbar at 6:00pm yesterday to resolve the issue.

Zunaid Ahmed Palak, state minister for ICT, and Md Afzal Hossain, posts and telecommunications division secretary, were also present at the meeting held on a digital platform.

"As the minister assured us that the issue will be resolved soon, we postponed our decision for one week," ISPAB President SEE PAGE 5 COL 2 AFP, Paris

Astronomers have captured the moment a supermassive black hole shredded a star the size of our sun, releasing images that show the devastating process in unprecedented details.

Telescopes capture

black hole

devouring star

Using telescopes from the European Southern Observatory (ESO), they were able to monitor light flaring from the process -- known as a tidal disruption event -- from a black hole just over 215 million light years from Earth.

They observed the star being physically torn apart as it was sucked into the black hole's giant

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

## Housewife gang-raped in Patuakhali

2 held; 6 others held in 3 districts on raperelated charges

STAR REPORT

A housewife was gangraped, allegedly by three people, in a remote char area under Rangabali upazila of Patuakhali on Friday night.

Being informed by locals police arrested two alleged rapists -- Sakib (27) and Habib (25) -- from their houses yesterday morning, inspector of Char Montaj Police Probe Centre.

Besides, a total of six persons were arrested in Jamalpur, Habiganj, and Madaripur districts on raperelated charges between Friday evening and early yesterday.

In Patuakhali's gangincident, quoting rape the 30-year-old woman, SI Belal said three youths -- Sakib, Arif and Habib -entered the woman's house

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

## Case Against Nixon Section 144 imposed in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

The local administration yesterday imposed a one-day ban on holding any public gathering in Faridpur's Sadarpur upazila town.

The ban, from 9:00am yesterday to 9:00am today, was imposed as supporters of independent lawmaker Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, popularly known as Nixon Chowdhury, and Kazi Zafarullah, former lawmaker and also Awami League presidium member, called programmes on the same spot.

> According to sources SEE PAGE 5 COL 1



**PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 18** 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



A Sampan boat race underway near Avaymitra Ghat in the port city. The event was organised by Chattogram Metropolitan Awami League to demand the end of river pollution and grabbing at the Karnaphuli river and marking the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

RAJIB RAIHAN

THE COVID ELECTION

## Ardern scores landslide win in New Zealand

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern won a landslide victory in New Zealand's general election yesterday, leveraging success Covid-19 into an unprecedented majority she said gave her a mandate for progressive

Ardern's centre-left Labour Party took 64 seats in the 120-member

parliament with 49 percent of the vote, after the youthful and charismatic leader steered the nation through the upheaval wrought by the global pandemic.

"Thank you to the many people who gave us their vote, who trusted us to continue leading New Zealand's recovery," the 40-year-old told cheering supporters.

Ardern had dubbed the vote "the Covid election" and campaigned on her government's success in eliminating community transmission of the virus, which has caused just 25 deaths in a population of five million.

The pandemic is one of a string of emergencies that tested Ardern's leadership during a torrid first term, after she rode to an unexpected victory in 2017 polls on the back of a wave of support dubbed "Jacinda-mania".

She displayed both empathy and decisive action on gun control after a white supremacist gunman killed 51 Muslim worshippers in the Christchurch mosques attack last year. Ardern again found herself comforting a shocked nation

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2