



OUTBOUND REMITTANCE
Billions of dollars sent abroad, but there is no reliable data on it
STORY ON B1

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Your Right to Know

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Gone are the hills

Dohazari-Cox's Bazar rail track project leads to destruction of nature

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

The village is named after its highest hill, Rangapahar, but the natural landmark no longer exists.

Located under Chunoti union in the district's Lohagara upazila, it has lost all of its hills in just two years since 2018 when the construction of the Dohazari-Cox's Bazar railway track began.

The hills were razed to make way for the 120km track, which is being built under a fast-track project of the government.

A number of hills and hillocks in the upazila have also been flattened by locals under contract with Toma Construction and Company Limited for supplying earth to the rail line project.

During a visit on October 14, this correspondent saw that a roughly one-kilometre road was built filling up a piece of arable land and a canal in Rangapahar village to facilitate the transportation of earth.

The entrance to the road was blocked with a makeshift gate of corrugated sheets. This correspondent managed to pass through it with the help of a local and reach a spot of hill cutting.

"There was a big hill over there," said Abu Shahed, a villager, pointing

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

22 million cubic feet of hills razed at Rangapahar village of Chunoti union

Arable land and canal filled up to build provisional road to carry earth from Chunoti hills

Perpetrators are taking advantage of DoE negligence

The rail track construction will need about eight crore cubic feet of earth

Government permitted 120 acres of hill cutting in at 15 spots



A couple of structures on what remains of a hill in Rangapahar village of Chattogram's Lohagara upazila. Dozens of such hills have been flattened in the village for the construction of Dohazari-Cox's Bazar railway link. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA YOUSUF



Run dope tests on drivers

PM directs authorities

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the authorities concerned to bring drivers under a dope testing system to know whether they abuse drugs.

"We need to know whether those who are driving [vehicles] use drugs. They need to undergo dope testing. This testing is absolutely essential for each drivers. You have to do this," she said while addressing a discussion through a video conference from the Gono Bhaban.

The road transport and bridges ministry organised the event at the auditorium

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

THE THIRD VIEW

Why do our protesters get beaten up?
'Development' must also be of values



MAHFUZZ ANAM

"Next year, we will celebrate the fifty years of our independence. Are we going to enter it with this medieval attitude towards dissent?"

SEE PAGE 8

\$597m pledged for Rohingyas

Donors aim to meet \$1b target in funding for the refugees in 2020, urge Myanmar to create conditions for their return

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The international community yesterday pledged \$597 million in humanitarian assistance for Rohingyas in the region and urged Myanmar to create conditions for their repatriation.

The US, EU, and UK, announced \$200 million, €96 million and £37 million.

The announcement came at a donors' conference for the Rohingyas co-hosted by the US, UK, EU and UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

This year, Bangladesh received less than 50 percent of the \$1 billion required for the Rohingya refugees.

Delegates from 50 countries, including Bangladesh and several ASEAN states, attended the virtual conference.

"In the initial joint response plan for Bangladesh, the budget was \$877 million. But the COVID-19 pandemic required additional funding. Therefore, the budget went up to about \$1 billion," a UN official told The Daily Star.

Reading out a joint statement from the co-hosts of the conference, Filippo Grandi, UN high commissioner for the refugees, said when the international community continues efforts to secure long term solution, their focus now is on sustainable response planning so that Bangladesh could more effectively support the management of the response to maximise the benefits of both Bangladeshi and Rohingya communities.

"The crisis is affecting the wider region. Rohingyas, especially women

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

WATER TRANSPORT

Strike lifted, workers get back to work

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The indefinite work abstention announced by water transport workers was withdrawn yesterday evening after a meeting at the labour ministry in Dhaka.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) Chairman Commodore Golam Sadek said as the water transport owners agreed to pay their workers food allowances, the latter withdrew their programme.

The food allowances are fixed in three slabs -- Tk 1,000, Tk 1,200 and Tk 1,500, he said.

State Minister for labour and employment Begum Monnujan Sufian chaired the meeting at her office where representatives of water transport owners and workers' associations, Shipping Ministry Secretary Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury, Director General (DG) of Department of Shipping Commodore Abu Jafar Md Jalal Uddin were present.

However, a majority of water transport workers in Chattogram did not resume work initially as the announcement of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

In view of the virtual absence of all opposition political activities due to Covid-19, we have decided to run a series of interviews of political party leaders who are not in the government-led alliance. The interviews will highlight their assessment of the overall situation of the country, discuss their own party's activities and the plans they have for the future. We hope our readers will find the interviews informative and helpful in moving towards the future. We start with Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, secretary general of the biggest opposition party BNP, to be followed by GM Quader, chairman of Jatiya Party. -Editor

There's no room for proper politics

Says Fakhrul, blames it on govt

Following is an excerpt of the interview taken by The Daily Star's Golam Mortoza:

The Daily Star (DS): BNP is a large political party. Is it facing a kind of a crisis now?

Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir: The BNP is the largest political party in the country. Its leadership has always been very strong. Certainly, there is a crisis right now. Party Chairperson Khaleda Zia has been convicted in false cases. She was jailed for two years. As per the party charter, Senior



Now, we

are facing the government's

repression. More than one lakh cases have

been filed and more than 35 lakh party

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Wrapping themselves up in a plastic cover, a mother and her child take shelter from the rain on a pavement in the capital's Banglamotor area. Inset, a rickshaw-puller waits for passengers in the same area. An afternoon rain, induced by depression in the Bay, caused people, especially the homeless, to suffer badly yesterday.

DEPRESSION IN BAY

Rain forecast for next 48 hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Heavy rains, induced by a depression formed in the Bay of Bengal, disrupted regular life of people across the country yesterday.

Rains started at noon and continued till evening in phases and would be continued for next 48 hours due to the depression.

"There will be rainfall across the country for at least next 48 hours," said Shamsuddin Ahmed, director of the Met office, yesterday evening.

The depression formed in the Bay will be intensified and might cause heavy rainfall in Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram, Mymensingh and Sylhet divisions in the next 48 hours, the Met office said.

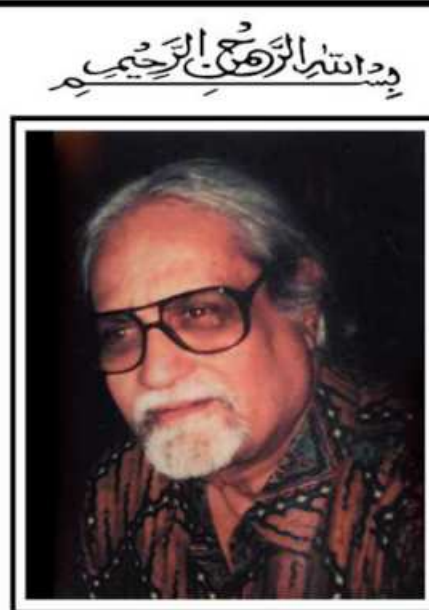
The depression lies over north-west and adjoining west-central Bay.

According to a weather forecast published on the official website of Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), warning signal no-3 was hoisted at the seaports of Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Mongla and Payra.

All fishing trawlers and

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Azimur Rahman
1935 - 2001

Peace, My Heart

by Rabindranath Tagore

Peace, my heart, let the time for the parting be sweet.
Let it not be a death but completeness.
Let love melt into memory and pain into songs.
Let the flight through the sky end in the folding of the wings over the nest.
Let the last touch of your hands be gentle like the flower of the night.
Stand still, O Beautiful End, for a moment, and say your last words in silence.
I bow to you and hold up my lamp to light you on your way.

**BANGLADESH
UPDATE**



1,696
New cases in 24hrs



3,94,827
Total cases



5,747
Deaths



3,10,532
Recoveries

**GLOBAL
UPDATE**



1,139,420
Deaths



41,720,837
Total cases

Strike lifted, workers get back

FROM PAGE 1
withdrawal of the work abstention from the president and secretary of Bangladesh Noutan Sramik Federation did not reach them till around 8:30pm last night, the federation's Joint Secretary Nabi Alam, who resides in Chattogram, told The Daily Star.

"We saw on television only the labour minister saying that the workers agreed to withdraw the work abstention," he said.

"Later, we got confirmation from the two top leaders, which we got around 8:30pm," he added.

Bangladesh Noutan Sramik Federation enforced the work abstention since the early hours of October 20, which would continue until their 11-point demand -- including food allowances, sea allowances, appointment letters, identity cards and other benefits -- were met.

Formally, only the food allowance demand was met and negotiated yesterday and the rest will be negotiated, federation President Shah Alam said.

Businesses were apprehensive of serious disruption in the supply chain of commodities and industrial products and further price hike of essentials as daylong meetings with workers and owners' associations, initiated by the government, could not ease the stalemate.

Unloading of import cargo from cargo vessels at the outer anchorage of Chattogram Port and transport of these goods with the help of lighter vessels through inland water routes had been suspended for the last three days.

As of yesterday, 42 bigger-sized cargo vessels with 10 lakh tonnes of import cargo were stranded at the outer anchorage. 40 of those had been anchoring idle for the last three days, while the other two arrived on Wednesday afternoon.

Importers incurred huge amounts of financial losses for the three-day standstill as the demurrage charge for these vessels' idle stay at sea over the last three days stood at around \$1.55 million.

Besides, over 900 lighter vessels loaded with 12 lakh tonnes of such goods were idle at 38 different private docks across the country.

Industry owners said apart from the demurrage charges, there was disruption in transport of imported commodities and raw materials to factories.

Seacom Group Managing Director Mohammed Amirul Haque said such a strike in the midst of a pandemic will seriously hamper the country's economy which is trying hard to recover from the economic fallout of the pandemic.

Two cargo vessels carrying around 75,000 tonnes of cement clinker imported for the group's Premier Cement factories in Dhaka and Chattogram were stuck at the outer anchorage.

Haque said they would have to bear \$12,500 in demurrage charges for the daily overstay of each of these two vessels. He also informed that 50 lighter vessels and oil tankers carrying cement clinkers, edible oil and petroleum for the group also remained idle.

Earlier in the afternoon, State Minister for Shipping Khaled Mahmud Chowdhury was hopeful of solving the issue by yesterday as the officials of BIWTA and Shipping Department sat in meetings with water transport owners and workers.

The state minister told this to journalists after the newly appointed Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Vikram Doraiswami made a courtesy call on the state minister at his ministry office.

Khaled said workers' demand for food allowance is justified.

"Vessel workers had gone on strike earlier and that was solved through discussions. The current issue will also be solved through discussions with both owners and workers."

In the afternoon, Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) Chairman Rear Admiral SM Abul Kalam Azad also sat in a meeting with leaders and stakeholders of the water transport sector.

Run dope tests on drivers

FROM PAGE 1
of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority on the occasion of the National Road Safety Day 2020.

Hasina asked people not to take law into their own hands. She urged people to give up their mentality of assaulting drivers and attacking vehicles over an accident as it invites further accidents in many cases.

She suggested that pedestrians should use zebra crossings. "Everyone must follow traffic rules as those are applicable to all."

The premier asked drivers to give up the mentality of overtaking on roads and highways as it causes accidents in many cases.

Talking about pedestrians, Hasina said there was a serious lack of awareness over traffic rules. "Some pedestrians cross roads just raising their hands in front of running vehicles without considering that it takes time to stop a vehicle even if the driver applies the brake. People will have to be aware about it."

Citing more examples of violation of traffic rules, the PM said the most unfortunate thing is that mothers carrying babies cross roads without using footbridges.

Carrying his baby in his arms, a father was seen crossing a road after scaling the central reservation, she added.

The PM advised people to call 999

police helpline to rescue any victim and take him to a hospital as police services are very good now.

Hasina asked those who are carrying out the road safety movement to conduct a massive campaign in this regard.

She stressed the need for providing training to bus drivers' helpers alongside the drivers, ensuring fitness of vehicles, arranging alternative drivers for long route vehicles and making all aware of traffic rules from their school life.

The premier said the government would construct resting rooms for drivers along all long-distance roads in phases as they need rest.

She said the government has been working to ensure road safety by formulating different plans. The government was improving rural roads so that villagers could enjoy urban facilities staying in villages, she added.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader presided over the function, while Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan was connected to it virtually.

Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Road Transport and Bridges Ministry Md Akabbar Hossain, Chairman of Nirapad Sarak Chai Ilias Kandhan and noted columnist Syed Abul Maksud, among others, attended the event.

Gone are the hills

FROM PAGE 1
to a flattened space.

Around 15 to 20 hills existed at Rangapahar, adjacent to Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway. All of them are gone, he added.

Raseduzzaman Rasel, deputy general manager of Toma Construction, told The Daily Star they would need around eight crore cubic feet of earth in four phases for the rail track construction.

The company has signed a deal with a local named Md Elias, who is supposed to supply earth from Aziz Nagar of Lohagara, he said, adding they don't know exactly where he brings it from.

This correspondent repeatedly called Md Elias and sent him text messages for comment. He neither received the calls nor responded to the texts.

There was a dumper truck with a nameplate of the railway ministry and Toma at the site of the railway line. Sensing an environment department action, project officials and labourers left, taking away the excavator and trucks, locals said.

In 2016, the railways authorities got the prime minister's approval to cut hills for the construction of the rail track, according to official documents.

The ministry is allowed to raze 33 hills -- 120 acres in total -- at 15 spots of five reserve forests including Chunut, Fasiakhali, Medakocchopiy, Machuyakhali and Napitkhali.

But the hills being flattened at Rangapahar does not fall under government approval as the area is recorded as khas land.

Contacted over the phone, Mofizur Rahman, project director for Dohazari

Cox's Bazar railway line, said they were cutting hills for the rail track as per the government permission. But he has no knowledge about the other hills being razed.

He said the construction firm has hired locals to supply earth and they don't have any control over where the earth comes from.

DOE NEGLIGENCE

Though the hill cutting has been going on there for the last two years, the Chattogram region Department of Environment office did not have any knowledge about it until recently.

They, however, sent a team to the spot for inspection on October 16.

Mohammad Moazzom Hossain, director of DoE Chattogram region, admitted that there was negligence on their part.

"Firstly, it is tough to get news on such hill cutting as the spots are in remote areas. The moment we got the allegation from locals, I sent my team. They inspected and submitted a report. We will take action as per the law," he said on October 18.

He added that they don't have the required manpower to look after all affairs happening in the areas under their jurisdiction.

Afzarul Islam, assistant director of DoE Chattogram region, told The Daily Star that that he has never seen such a massive hill cutting.

"We have found around 2.2 crore cubic feet of hills have been flattened. Locals confirmed that the earth from the hills was being used for the rail track construction."

Afzarul said he submitted the report of damage to higher authorities for further action.



A woman is all smiles as she buys two kgs of potato at the government-set price from a truck of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) on the capital's Topkhana Road yesterday. As prices of potato and onion have shot up in the markets lately, people gathered in front of such sale points across the city. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

There's no room for proper politics

FROM PAGE 1
leaders and activists have been accused in those cases.

DS: Is the number of cases you mentioned a political rhetoric or a reality?

Fakhrul: We don't do politics based on falsehood. We have documents. The allegations are political. We have FIR copies. It is beyond imagination that there are 5,000 accused in a single case. There were even instances where there were no incidents, (still) cases were filed. Out of the 5,000 accused, the case document mentioned names of 100-150 and the rest are unknown. The unknowns were filled in with BNP leaders and activists. If anyone digs, everything will be clear. If you want to see, come to our office. We will show you the documents.

DS: Are you facing any case now?

Fakhrul: A total of 86 cases have been filed against me. The High Court stayed 35 cases, but the government is trying to revive those.

DS: The BNP doesn't talk about issues related to public interests like price hike of gas, electricity, and essentials. How do you react to this allegation?

Fakhrul: It's a propaganda which has been going around for a long time and especially after the 2018 national elections. But these are not true. The BNP tried to take to the street, but we were not allowed. Whenever we took to the street, water cannon and truncheons were used by law enforcers to quell us. Our women leaders were harassed. Many party leaders were abducted and killed. Party leaders and activists are in constant fear of abduction and killing, and they cannot stay in their homes.

DS: In the political arena, it is often said that the government in power will not allow the opposition on the street and the opposition cannot wage any movement. Is the BNP acting according to the government's desire?

Fakhrul: It is a propaganda that the BNP does not talk about people's problems. Unfortunately, many joined in to spread this propaganda, which surprised me.

DS: What do you mean by many joined in?

Fakhrul: Some civil society members joined in. When you people write columns, we see this. These are not true. We did not compromise with the government.

DS: You said the BNP did not compromise. On social media, some senior leaders have been saying that you compromised and that's why Khaleda Zia was allowed out.

Fakhrul: It is not true. It is also a propaganda against the BNP. Begum Zia is sick. She came home following

application of her family members. She was not getting treatment in hospital.

DS: The BNP has complained against the Election Commission publicly and repeatedly. But even after that, you are participating in elections. Isn't it contradictory?

Fakhrul: It is not. What is the alternative? The alternative is to resist elections and resort to violence. We don't believe in the politics of violence. We have experienced it many times ... the government resorted to violence and blamed us for it. That's why we tried to maximise the use of the minimum space [we get] in a democratic manner.

DS: College teachers and students cannot post anything anti-government on social media. Have you seen that?

Fakhrul: An authoritarian government is always fearful of losing the power. They don't allow people to speak up. What is the reason behind the directives that college teachers and students cannot express their opinions? The government knows that the college teachers and students are not in its favour.

This is nothing new. The constitution has been amended. There are three clauses against which you cannot say anything. If you say anything that goes against those clauses, seditious case will be filed against you. The Digital Security Act gagged the scope for freedom of expression. You see we are not even creating a buzz against it. If college students are barred from freedom of expression, it is a dreadful matter.

DS: There was a time when the BNP was very vocal against India. After a pause for a while, the party is making some statements against India. The BNP is, however, very flexible about China. What is the reason behind it?

Fakhrul: The BNP does not do politics for or against any particular country. The party's stance has always been to uphold the interest of the country (Bangladesh). India is our big neighbour, we have always raised our voice about the unresolved issues with India. We are not getting our fair share of water from the Teesta and other common rivers. We have always spoken against it. We are continuing our protest against border killings of Bangladeshis. Our stand against Rampal Power Plant is unequivocal.

China is one of leading economic powerhouses in the world. Bangladesh needs the support of that power. As a political party, we believe in maintaining cordial relations with an economic powerhouse like China.

To talk about the unresolved issues or asking for our fair share does not mean we are anti-India. We believe in maintaining cordial relationship with

China, India, and other countries on the basis of fairness.

DS: Is Oikyafront active now?

Fakhrul: Our Oikyafront is still intact. Everything is not visible all the time for various reasons. Due to government repression, we cannot do proper politics, but our front is intact.

DS: There are reports that Khaleda Zia is not happy with the formation of Oikyafront and its activities. She has expressed her dissatisfaction.

Fakhrul: This is not correct. She has given directives to keep the unity intact. After coming out of jail, she has emphasised on the need for bigger unity.

DS: Does the BNP have ties with the Jamaat-e-Islami?

Fakhrul: Yes, the BNP has ties with Jamaat. The ties remain as it was before. We haven't observed any programme with Jamaat for a long time. We have not observed a programme collectively with Jamaat since 2015.

DS: It is said that the BNP's relations with Jamaat have strained on the war crime trial issue.

Fakhrul: There can be difference of opinion between parties in an alliance. And it can be in the case of the 20-party alliance. But that relations have not strained.

DS: The war crimes trial took place a long time after 1971. Still, the BNP took a stance against the trial of war criminals. Has the BNP opposed the war crimes trial due to its association with Jamaat?

Fakhrul: It is not that the BNP was against the war crimes trial. We were always for the trial, and our position is still the same. We have talked about the quality of the trial. We have criticised the loopholes of the trial process. We should keep in mind that the BNP's founder was a valiant freedom fighter, sector commander and a Bir Uttam. We fought to liberate our country. There are so many freedom fighters in the BNP, a party that cannot oppose the war crimes trial.

DS: But the BNP never advocated for holding the war crimes trials.

Fakhrul: This allegation is not correct. We did not want to politicise the war crimes trial. The Awami League did it. We wanted a fair war crimes trial.

DS: You are carrying out the responsibilities of BNP secretary general for years. Do you think you have lived up to your job?

Fakhrul: I tried. The path of discharging the duty is very tough. But we are moving forward. I think a national unity is badly needed to restore democratic system in the country. I'm a firm believer.

Log on to www.thedailystar.net for the full interview.

US Senate committee approves sending subpoenas to Twitter and Facebook CEOs

REUTERS, Washington

The US Senate Judiciary Committee voted to subpoena the chief executives of Twitter and Facebook after the social media platforms decided to block stories from the New York Post that made claims about Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden's son.

The vote passed along party lines with 12 Republicans approving the motion. The 10 Democrats on the committee were not present for the session over its consideration of Judge Amy Coney Barrett's Supreme Court nomination, which the panel approved.

Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham said he hoped the subpoenas would give the panel some "leverage to secure (the CEOs') testimony" if they did not come and testify voluntarily.

The CEOs of Facebook and Twitter will testify on allegations of anti-conservative bias at a yet-to-be-determined date. The companies have come under heavy criticism from conservatives over their decision to flag the two New York Post stories as spreading disinformation and their attempts to clamp down on distribution of the stories.

Nigeria's Lagos shut down after protest shooting

AFP, Lagos

Shops were shuttered and streets empty yesterday as Nigeria's largest city Lagos was locked down under curfew after unrest flared following the shooting of protesters.

Amnesty International said at least 12 people were killed by the Nigerian army and police in a brutal crackdown on protesters Tuesday that drew international condemnation.

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo said his "heart goes out" to the victims of the shooting as well as policemen and others who have lost their lives in several days of turmoil in Africa's most populous country.

"The pain of these terrible events is palpable in our towns and cities, and some losses are irreplaceable, but we can and will get justice for all of them," a statement said.

President Muhammadu Buhari has not yet directly commented on the shooting, drawing fierce criticism for his silence.

Nigeria's army has dubbed as "fake news" reports that soldiers opened fire on demonstrators.

Police Minister Muhammad Maigari Dingyadi told the BBC that troops were not ordered to open fire on protesters.

"I cannot say who is involved in the shooting... definitely not the police. Soldiers have already spoken about this, they are denying their involvement," he said.

Pictures and videos from the attack were widely shared on social media, unleashing a wave of anger at the authorities.

Buildings including police stations and the National Port Authority were torched and clashes erupted in several locations on Wednesday.

France extends virus curfew to more regions: PM

REUTERS, Paris

French Prime Minister Jean Castex yesterday said that because of the rapid spread of the coronavirus, the government will extend the 2100 to 0600 curfew to 38 more departments, starting from Friday at midnight.

He said the curfew would now impact a total of 46 million people and would include some overseas French territories. France has a population of about 67 million people.

Last week France already imposed a curfew in Paris and eight other big cities.

"A second wave of the coronavirus epidemic is now under way in France and Europe. The situation is very serious," Castex said at a news conference, adding that the month of November would be very tough.

"The coming weeks will be hard and the number of deaths will continue to rise," he said.

He said the curfew would take effect from Friday at midnight and remain in place for six weeks, adding that the situation would be evaluated next week and that curfew rules might be tightened if necessary.

France has reported more a seven-day average of more than 20,000 new cases over the past six days and the total number of confirmed infections is now over 957,000. More than 34,000 people have died from the disease.

Rain forecast

FROM PAGE 1

boats were also cautioned in the northern Bay, the warning added.

The Department of Shipping has banned all small launches below 65 feet in length on inland waterways in the district since Wednesday morning.

In addition, more than 100 chargs in different upazilas in Pataukhali, along with some other areas, have been inundated with 2 to 3 feet of water due to heavy rains.

FIVE MISSING AS SPEED BOAT CAPSIZED

At least five passengers are missing after a speedboat capsized in the Agunmukha river in Rangabali upazila of Patuakhali around 5:30pm yesterday.

There were 18 passengers on board and 13 passengers could reach the river bank by swimming, but five people are still missing.

Rangabali Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Mashfaqueur Rahman and Rangabali Police Station Officer-in-charge Ali Ahmed confirmed the matter.

The missing passengers are Mahibbulla, 35, a policeman, Kabir, 30, an NGO worker, Mostafa, 35, Hasan, 25, and Imran, 25, of Charchandrail village.

Rangabali UNO Mashfaqueur Rahman said that the speedboat with 18 passengers left Rangabali's Koralia Launch Ghat for Galachipa's Panpatti Launch Ghat around 5:00pm.

All of a sudden, the bottom part of the speedboat collapsed and it sank in the river, he added.

WAR CRIMES

Death warrant for JP leader Kaisar

UNB, Dhaka

The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) yesterday issued death warrant for Syed Mohammad Kaisar for his crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

The full verdict of the Supreme Court, upholding the death penalty of Jatiya Party leader and former state minister Kaisar, has been received and sent to the office concerned, said Syed Ahmed, registrar of the ICT.

The death warrant has been sent to the Dhaka Central Jail, Keraniganj, secretaries to the home and law ministries and the district magistrate.

Kaisar can file a petition seeking review of the death penalty within 15 days.

On January 14, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court upheld the death penalty of the JP leader, handed down by the ICT for his crimes against humanity.

The full SC verdict was published on Wednesday.

On January 23, 2014, the ICT sentenced Kaisar to death. The ICT also sentenced him to death on seven charges, life-term imprisonment on four charges and 22-year-jail on three other charges.

Later, Kaisar filed an appeal petition against the verdict.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

This man, spotted walking off with a fledgling pond heron in the capital's Baily Road yesterday, said the bird fell from a tree and he is taking it away as a pet. Locals, however, said a large number of herons nested in the trees of the area during the last six months when the ever-bustling city practically went to sleep. Now that usual life has returned, some floating people often pick up young birds from the trees and take them away.

When will it be ready?

Work for underpass promised following deaths of 2 students unfinished in 2yrs

HELEMUL ALAM

On July 29, 2018, a bus rammed into Dia Khanam Mim and Abdul Karim Rajib, both students of Shaheed Ramiz Uddin Cantonment College, killing them and injuring 12 others while they were standing on the pavement at a bus stop on Airport Road in the capital.

The deaths triggered a nationwide protest calling for road safety by their classmates and students across the country, which eventually prompted the government to approve the long-delayed road transport law.

Amid the movement, the family members of the two students and the principal of the college met the prime minister on August 2 that year where the PM promised to construct an underpass near the college.

It has been more than two years, but the underpass is yet to be completed. As a result, pedestrians and students of the college and other institutions in Kurmitola area continue to cross the busy Airport Road amid risks.

On August 12, 2018, the premier laid the foundation stone of the underpass at an event on the college premises.

The Roads and Highways Department began the construction work on September 26, 2018. The deadline for the Tk 57 crore project ended in June this year and now has been extended till June next year.

"Around 98 percent of the work has already been completed. But due to the ongoing pandemic, we could not complete it," said Md Shamim Al Mamun, executive engineer of RHD. "We are at the final stage. We will be able to complete the work before the new schedule -- June 2021," he told The Daily Star recently.

The underpass is 53-metre long and its width is 3.5-metre. The thoroughfare is connected with north and north-east and western districts. Bangladesh Army is implementing the project.

Once built, it will facilitate safe movement of pedestrians as large numbers of commuters and students of different educational institutions cross the street daily.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

ATTACK ON SURANJIT, SAMS KIBRIA

Trials of 3 cases begin in Sylhet

Lufazzaman Babar, Ariful among charged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Trial of three sensational cases -- attempted murder of former AL leader Suranjit Sengupta, grenade attack in his rally, and grenade attack in former Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria -- began at a Sylhet court yesterday.

In all three cases, Sylhet Speedy Trial Tribunal framed charges against former state minister for home Lufazzaman Babar, Sylhet City Mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury, former Habiganj Mayor GK Gous and others.

In the attempted murder case of Suranjit and explosive case filed for attacking his rally on June 21, 2004, the court framed charge against the trio along with seven others, Sarwar Hossain Abdal, public prosecutor of the tribunal said. In the explosive case filed for grenade attack in Kibria's rally on January 27, 2005, charges against the trio and 25 others were framed, he added.

Meanwhile, testimony-recording of witnesses in the murder case of Kibria was deferred as some witnesses were not present, he said.

The prosecutor said, "With the charge framing of the cases, trial began after a long wait."

On June 21, 2004, a grenade attack took place at the rally of Suranjit Sengupta at Derai upazila bazaar in Sunamganj. Suranjit escaped death but a Jubo League activist was killed and 29 others were injured.

On January 27, 2005, another grenade attack took place in Baidyerbazar of Habiganj Sadar where Shah AMS Kibria and four others died.

'Lasting solution only possible if there's no impunity'

Dutch Ambassador Harry Verweij on Rohingya crisis in Myanmar

PORIMOL PALMA

A lasting solution to the Rohingya crisis in Rakhine and the situation in other parts of Myanmar is only possible if there is no impunity, Dutch Ambassador to Bangladesh, Harry Verweij, has said.

"Justice and accountability for gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, regardless of who commits it, is necessary to foster conditions for durable peace and national reconciliation in Myanmar," he said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star yesterday.

Dutch Foreign Minister Stef Blok recently wrote a letter to Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen.

Harry Verweij handed over the letter to Momen on October 18 ahead of The Gambia's submission of its memorial on the Rohingya genocide to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the top UN court, today.

Asked about the content of the letter, the ambassador said with the letter, The Netherlands confirms its intention, together with Canada, to intervene in the case brought by The Gambia.

The case shows the discrimination and persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar, which created the conditions for Myanmar's security forces to perpetrate atrocities against the Rohingya.

Myanmar's violations include the commission of genocide against the Rohingya, mostly by way of the systematic and widespread perpetration of mass murder, sexual violence, torture, forced displacement, and denial of access to food and shelter. These conditions have caused over 850,000 Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh since 2016.

The Gambia filed the case more than two years after a brutal military crackdown against the Rohingya in

2017 when 750,000 of them fled to Bangladesh from Rakhine state.

"As States Party to the Genocide Convention, The Netherlands and Canada consider it our obligation to support the laudable step The Gambia took," the Dutch envoy said.

Its objectives include ending impunity for those committing atrocities in Myanmar, upholding the pledge to prevent genocide and holding those responsible to account.

Harry Verweij said The Netherlands will assist with the complex legal issues that are expected to arise and will pay special attention to crimes related to sexual and gender-based violence, including rape, against the Rohingya.

The joint application by The Netherlands and Canada will be submitted to the ICJ after the deadline, which is July 23, 2021, for receiving all documents from both The Gambia and Myanmar.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

POLLS CODE VIOLATION

SC upholds Nixon Chowdhury's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that granted anticipatory bail to lawmaker Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, known as Nixon Chowdhury, in a case over violations of the electoral code of conduct.

Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice Md Nuruzzaman passed "no order" on a petition filed by the state seeking a stay on the HC order of bail to Nixon Chowdhury.

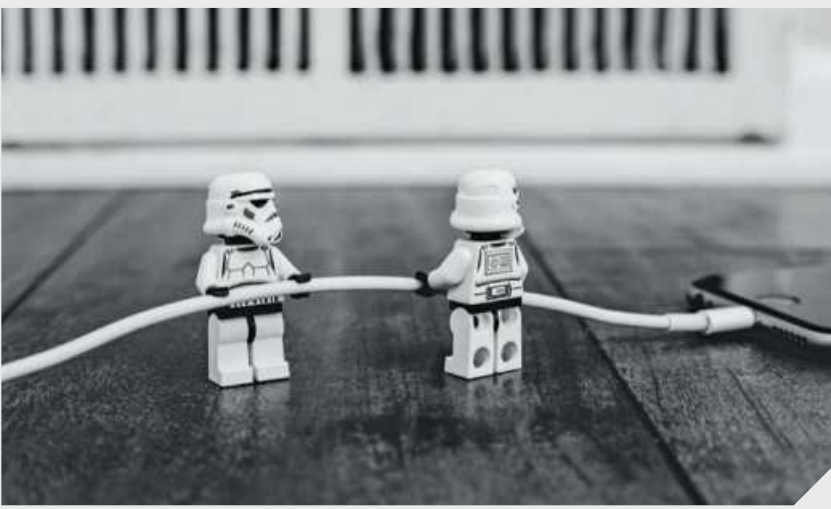
The apex court chamber judge's "no order" means that the HC's anticipatory bail to Nixon Chowdhury will remain in force, Assistant Attorney General Md Saiful Alam told The Daily Star.

Lawyers Abdul Baset Majumdar and Sayeed Ahmed Raza appeared for Nixon Chowdhury during hearing of the stay petition before SC chamber judge's court.

On October 20, the HC granted anticipatory bail to Nixon Chowdhury, for eight weeks on some conditions in the case over violations of the electoral code of conduct.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

MINI BYTES



Apple ditches the charger: Smart or outright madness?

EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

Apple decided to leave out their phone charger as they sell the new iPhone 12. People went nuts and the meme community had a field day for about a week. In normal human terms, that week is like several hundred years' worth of #lols at Apple's expense. But who really got the last laugh?

Apple lost up to \$81 billion in market value as shares tumbled 4% following the iPhone 12 launch. All because they wanted to exclude a phone charger. Other brands jumped on the bandwagon to quickly suggest how they offer so much more because their prices INCLUDE a charger. Yep, that is the big draw apparently when what consumers really want is an excellent display and a feature laden camera above all else.

1 billion cellphones go into production annually. While phones eventually become outdated, chargers typically do not. So each device has a charger which just keeps piling up, somewhere. Starts from an unused drawer at home and ends up likely in a landfill. Apple's logic is that by excluding a charger they are reducing the carbon footprint. They are friends of the planet and the polar bears who, let's face it, don't like the warm weather much and would tweet

against it if they knew how to.

The glitch in this pro-environment move is that Apple's devices generally use the proprietary Lightning port which requires its own cable. Everyone else has adopted the USB-C. Only last year's Pro models from Apple got the USB-C chargers.

Apple shipped more than 200 million phones last year which means a lot of Lightning cables. If they really want to reduce waste, adopting the USB-C would be a start. Which is likely their stumbling, cautious direction anyways with other manufacturers following suit.

An average cellphone user replaces their unit once every 18 months. Phones, especially flagships last much, much longer. If you scour the second hand and refurbished market you will see phones three generations old still making the rounds. To put that into context, we generate around 40 million tons of electronic waste every year, worldwide. Only 12.5% of that is recycled with 85% going to landfills and incinerators. Reusing older, existing chargers is a small yet good step forward.

Remember the 3mm headphone jack? No one is really missing that anymore. No one will miss a non-bundled charger either. You just have to wait for the memes to pass.

Ex-husband held for attacking councillor with sharp weapon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, CUMILLA

A councillor of Cumilla City Corporation was allegedly attacked by her former husband at the town's Muradpur yesterday.

Injured Nehar Begum is a reserved-seat councillor for wards 16-18. She is being treated at Cumilla Medical College Hospital (CuMCH).

Police arrested the ex-husband, Rafikul Islam Rukku, from Chawkbazar Bus Stand area, in the afternoon, said Jakir Hossain, in-charge of Chawkbazar police outpost. The family also filed a case with Kotwali Police Station against Rafikul and some unidentified persons.

Quoting his mother, Nehar's son Jahirul Islam Sumon said Rafikul tried to slash her throat with a box cutter when she went for a morning walk in front of their house.

"Luckily, the cutter injured the side of her neck, which left a long cut. Due to the attack, she fell on the road and he fled. Locals rescued and took her to the hospital," he said.

The family alleged that Rafikul was involved in different objectionable activities and often quarrelled with them. Due to these reasons, in 2018, Nehar filed for divorce, they added.

Meanwhile, the councillor is out of danger now, said doctors at the hospital.

Dr Mushfiq Ahmed, who was on emergency duty at the hospital, said, "We had to put 30 stitches on her neck. A sharp lethal weapon was used for the attack."

Submit report on death of 3 minors

HC asks Jashore child dev centre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court (HC) bench has issued a rule instructing Jashore Child Development Centre to submit an investigation report on the death of three inhabitants within three months.

The rule was issued in response to a writ petition filed by Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association (BNWLA), seeking permission to visit the development centre to observe the standard of care being provided to the children there, a press release circulated by BNWLA said.

On August 13, three minor inmates of the juvenile detention centre were allegedly tortured to death by several staffers and senior inmates. Fifteen others were also injured.

"The HC bench of Justice Md Mojibur Rahman Miah and Justice Mohiuddin Shamim also questioned in the rule why Advocate Salma Ali and BNWLA will not be allowed to visit the youth detention centres to monitor the care being received by the convicted children," said the press release.

"Following the death of the three children, we need to independently verify the situation inside the youth detention centres run by the government," Salma Ali said.

The statement added that the writ petition was filed by Advocate Nahid Mahtab and Advocate Rumana Haque.

Shilpakala halls set to welcome audience today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is reopening three of its theatre halls -- Studio Theatre Hall, National Theatre Hall and Experimental Theatre Hall -- today, after remaining closed for seven months.

Theatre artists and staff are excited to resume their work at the location after a long time.

From now, two plays can be held at the halls per week, on Friday and Saturday.

Today, Jagoroni Theatre will stage their play "Rajar Chithi" at Experimental Theatre Hall. Palakar will stage "Ujane Mrityu" at National Theatre Hall, and Theatre Factory will stage "Asharosso

Prothom Diboshe" tomorrow.

Besides, theatre troupe "Kheyali" will hold a tribute programme at Studio Theatre Hall today.

Commenting on the reopening, noted director and playwright Mamunur Rashid told The Daily Star, "As a person invested in theatre, I can say that this is an immensely joyous moment for us. We are going to stage the play 'Kohe Facebook' this month."

Renowned theatre personality Ferdousi Majumdar said, "Our troupe is planning on staging a play in November. We are overwhelmed with happiness."

Authorities had decided to close the halls on March 18 due to the pandemic.



Members of reputed troupe Dhaka Theatre rehearsing for their new production "Ektu Loukik Othoba Oloukik Streamer" at Shilpakala Acdemy. The play will premiere next Friday.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

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‘CUSTODIAL DEATH’ OF RAYHAN

Second autopsy report handed over to PBI

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Primary report of the second autopsy of Rayhan Ahmed, who was allegedly tortured to death in Sylhet city’s Bandarbazar police outpost in October 11, was handed over to Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) yesterday.

Dr Shamsul Islam, head of the forensics department at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, handed over the autopsy report.

While talking to journalists, he said, “Rayhan’s second autopsy has resemblances with the first one. He was beaten badly with blunt weapons which eventually led to his death.”

Earlier on October 15, the first autopsy report of was handed over to PBI. That day, the second autopsy was done after exhuming his body from grave.

The first autopsy report stated that there were 111 injury marks in on his body and two of his nails were pulled off.

The autopsy report also mentioned that Rayhan was tortured between two and four hours before death.

His stomach was empty and he had severe internal bleeding because of excessive physical torture.

The second autopsy report’s details are not available yet.

Rayhan (33), a resident of the city’s Neharipara area, died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital at 7:50am on October 11, around an hour after he was admitted there by police.

After allegations arose of torture on him inside the Bandarbazar police outpost, an internal probe body of police was formed, which initially found involvement of the outpost’s police personnel. Four police personnel, including the outpost in-charge, were suspended and three others were withdrawn from the outpost.

PBI arrested a suspended constable in connection of the death and taken into five-day remand on Tuesday, a day after three constables testified in court.

Meanwhile, another sub-inspector of the outpost, Hasan Uddin, was suspended on Wednesday as a probe body formed by Police Headquarters to investigate who helped Akber to run away found his involvement with the incident.



Three people were killed and 20 got injured after this Dhaka-bound bus fell into a roadside ditch in Manikganj’s Singair upazila yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: STAR

3 killed as bus falls into ditch

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

At least three people were killed and 20 others injured as a Dhaka-bound bus fell into a roadside ditch in Manikganj’s Singair upazila yesterday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as

Ridoy Hossain (28), the bus driver; Anwara Begum (65), a passenger, and pedestrian Nikhil Sarkar (25).

Officer-In-Charge (Investigation) of Singair Police Station Abul Kalam said the driver of the Dhaka-bound Shuktara Paribahan bus lost control when he tried to avoid hitting the

pedestrian and the vehicle fell into a ditch in Rishipara, leaving three people dead on the spot and 20 passengers injured.

The injured were taken to different hospitals and bodies of the deceased were kept at Manikganj District Hospital morgue for autopsy.

AMASSING Tk 3.08CR ILLEGALLY Suspended DIG prisons indicted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against suspended Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Prisons Bazlur Rashid, in connection with a case filed for amassing Tk 3.08 crore beyond known sources of income.

Bazlur Rashid, now in jail, pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after Md Iqbal Hosaain of the Special Judge’s Court-5 of Dhaka read out the charges to him.

Before that, the judge dismissed the petition submitted for discharging him from the case and fixed November 22 for starting the trial.

On August 26, ACC deputy director Md Nasir Uddin -- also the case’s investigation officer -- submitted the charge sheet to the Senior Special Judge’s Court of Dhaka.

ACC arrested Bazlur in the case -- filed with ACC integrated district office-1 of Dhaka -- and showed him arrested in the case on October 20 last year.

The following day, the home ministry suspended him from service.

According to the case statement, Bazlur signed a contract with a real estate company in 2018 to buy a flat in the capital’s Siddeshwari Road area at Tk 3.09 crore.

Through April 20, 2018 to June 7, 2018, he paid Tk 3.08 crore in cash and cheque, but during ACC officials’ interrogation, he could not show any legal source of the money.

According to his bio, Bazlur joined the service as a jail superintendent in 1993. He was promoted to DIG prisons in 2013 and transferred to Dhaka in 2016.



Death anniv of Syed Ahmed Kamal today

CITY DESK

Today is the 5th death anniversary of Alhaj Syed Ahmed Kamal, son of late Syed Anisuzzaman from Durmut village in Jamalpur, according to a press release.

A doa mahfil will be held at different mosques of his village including Durmut Central Jame Masjid in Jamalpur marking the occasion.

Anisuzzaman was a renowned income tax lawyer and former president of Chittagong Bar Association, and ex-chairman of Hoechst Pharmaceuticals.

Late Syed Ahmed Kamal is the father of Syed Mohammad Kamal, country manager, Mastercard.

Tk 2 lakh mugged from elderly couple in Ctg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Mahfuzur Rahman and Jannatul Ferdous had just withdrawn Tk 2 lakh in cash from a bank in port city’s Agrabad yesterday. They boarded a bus to Shantibag area, dropped off, and were walking past a medicine store in Chotopole when a CNG auto-rickshaw zoomed past them.

In the auto-rickshaw were a group of muggers who snatched Jannatul’s bag, inside which the money was kept, and fled

the scene, said Fariza Akhter, daughter of the victims.

Mahfuzur Rahman is a former retired Deputy General Manager of Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation. Robbed off the money, the elderly couple are now distraught, their daughter said.

Contacted, Rafiqul Islam, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Halishahar Police Station confirmed the incident and said the police are investigating the case and trying to identify the muggers.



Gulshan Society has signed an MoU with The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Foundation Bangladesh at a ceremony on Wednesday to become the second Residential Community Partner of the globally- recognised award programme. Barrister Shukla Sarwat Siraj, Secretary General of Gulshan Society, and Rizwan Bin Farouq, Chairman of The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Foundation Bangladesh, signed the MoU on behalf of their organisations.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Lasting solution

FROM PAGE 3

Asked how this application will support the genocide case, he said The Netherlands wants to support The Gambia’s request and ensure an independent process of investigation that might lead to international accountability for the perpetrators and voluntary returns of Rohingyas to Rakhine in safety, security and dignity.

“As a State Party to the Genocide Convention, the Netherlands considers it an obligation to support these efforts which are of concern to all of humanity,” Verweij said.

Asked why only Canada and The Netherlands come up to support The Gambia’s case when 152 countries ratified the Genocide Convention, he said the two countries found each other in supporting The Gambia, based on common goals and efforts. “We think that with our mutual input the case is strong: it’s also helpful to work with a committed partner who is on the same line,” the diplomat said.

Asked if Myanmar is complying with the IJC order to prevent further acts of genocide in Rakhine, he said The Netherlands is deeply concerned about the Rohingya crisis.

“Developing a sustainable, long-term solution has become ever more complex with the intensification of conflict in Rakhine between the Arakan Army and the Tatmadaw, which is, of course, separate from the Rohingya crisis.”

A lasting solution for the situation in Rakhine State and other parts of Myanmar is only possible if there is no impunity, he said.

Accountability for the most serious crimes is one of the human rights priorities of Dutch foreign policy and is a key element in promotion of the international legal order and strengthening human rights, Harry Verweij said.

“The Netherlands, therefore, supports accountability efforts, specifically the ICC (International Criminal Court) investigation and the IIMM [Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar],” he said.

The Netherlands will also continue to call on Myanmar to grant full access and to cooperate with the aim to achieve accountability, he said.

US-Bangla to resume flights on Chennai and Kolkata routes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US-Bangla Airlines is set to resume its flights on Dhaka-Chennai-Dhaka, Chattogram-Chennai-Chattogram, and Dhaka-Kolkata-Dhaka routes from October 28.

For the flights on the Chennai and Kolkata routes, the airlines will use the 164-seater Boeing 737-800 aircrafts, said a press release.

Apart from Chennai and Kolkata, US-Bangla Airlines currently operates flights to Muscat, Doha, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Guangzhou.

Besides, the airlines is also operating fights on all seven domestic routes.

On the Kolkata route, flights of the airliner will leave Dhaka for Kolkata at 9:45am six days a week, except for Monday, and will land in Kolkata at 10:15am local time, the airlines said in a press release.

From Kolkata, the flights will fly for Dhaka at 11am local time and land at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 12:30pm.

On the Chennai route, the flights will leave Dhaka at 10:30am every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday and land in Chennai at 12:40pm local time.

From Chennai, the flight will leave for Dhaka at 1:30 pm on the same day and land in Dhaka at 4:40 pm.

Besides, the carrier will operate flights from Dhaka to Chennai via Chattogram and from Chennai to Dhaka via Chattogram every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday, the press release said.

SC upholds

FROM PAGE 3

The conditions are that the independent MP from Faridpur-4 will not misuse the privilege of bail and will not intimidate any witness or local administration. He will also assist the investigation officer in the inquiry.

The EC filed the case with Charbhadrason Police Station on October 15 against Nixon for violating

electoral code of conduct during the October 10 by-polls for Charbhadrason upazila chairman in Faridpur.

According to the case statement, Nixon (42) called Atul Sarkar, deputy commissioner of Faridpur, over mobile phone around 8am on October 9 and expressed his displeasure over the appointment of magistrates.

On election day, the assistant

commissioner (land) of Bhanga upazila ordered arrest of one of Nixon’s followers for violating electoral code of conduct. Nixon used abusive language in a phone conversation with Charbhadrason UNO Jasmin Sultana. Nixon also violated the electoral code by participating in a victory rally after announcement of by-polls results, said the case statement.

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GM & Division Head



ICT OPERATION DIVISION
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

When will it

FROM PAGE 3

“The main objective of the project is to ensure safe and uninterrupted passage for pedestrians and to prevent road accidents,” said Shamim Al Mamun.

Meanwhile, locals and pedestrians want it to be completed soon.

“We lost two of our friends and we don’t want any more deaths on this road,” said Shamim, a student of Shaheed Ramiz Uddin Cantonment School and College.

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

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e-Tender

Invitation e-Tender Notice No. 04/2020-21

Memo No. 46.02.2662.000.18.015.18-1140

Date: 22-10-2020

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of works:

Tender ID	Name of scheme	Procurement method	Last selling date & time	Closing date & time
506764	Maintenance of Agla UP Complex Bhaban under Nawabganj Upazila Dhaka	LTM	10-Nov-2020 17:00	11-Nov-2020 14:00

These are online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Tarun Kumar Boidya

Upazila Engineer

Phone: 027765068

E-mail: ue.dhaka.nawabganj@lged.gov.bd



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সড়ক হবে সংস্কার”

US ELECTION 2020



10 DAYS TO GO

Two-thirds of voters say polls won't be fair

Two-thirds of American voters are concerned the presidential election will not be fair, suggesting Donald Trump's sustained attacks on mass mail-in ballots are working.

Sixty-six per cent of voters described themselves as "very or quite" concerned that the election will not be free or fair, with 68 per cent saying they doubt the result will be clear on 4 November, the day after Election Day, according to a JL Partners-Independent survey.

What's more, 65 per cent of respondents said they were worried that mail-in ballots will not be counted or will be counted incorrectly. In a sign Trump's attacks on mass mail voting are working, 81 percent of his supporters have concerns compared to 59 percent of Biden's backers. When it comes to voter fraud, 78 per cent of the president's loyalists have such worries – compared to 51 per cent of Biden supporters.

Have US media gone too easy on Biden?

AFP, New York

President Donald Trump's testy relationship with the US media is no secret, but his election rival Joe Biden has had a rather different experience during the 2020 campaign.

The Democratic former senator and vice president has largely faced polite questions and only rare criticism, experts say, but some call the disparity a justified one given the Republican leader's provocative style.

Trump has spent the better part of a week repeatedly attacking his opponent over unsubstantiated allegations concerning Biden, his son Hunter and a Ukrainian company suspected of corruption -- and the media has followed suit.

But Biden only faced a question about the issue more than two days into the news hurricane, and he quickly swept it aside. The following day, Biden did not speak to reporters. Finally, on Sunday, he replied to only one question... about the flavor of his milkshake.

"Question of the day for Joe Biden," tweeted New York Times reporter Jonathan Martin. "Are you in hiding most of this week because you are only willing to answer milkshake-related questions?"



Trump has often accused the media of going soft on his adversary.

Criticism of how Biden is covered transcends the specific issue of his son's business dealings, and is not limited to conservative commentators, who have roundly denounced the mainstream media coverage.

Last week, when Trump and Biden participated in town hall-style events in place of a planned debate, the gap seemed stark: The president was grilled by NBC's Savannah Guthrie, while observers felt Biden got an easier ride from ABC's George Stephanopoulos, a former top aide to president Bill Clinton.

Similarly in mid-September, Trump was questioned by

Stephanopoulos during an ABC event that Politico described as an "icy grilling," while characterizing a subsequent CNN town hall with Biden as reminiscent of "an affable reunion of old acquaintances."

For Grant Reeher, a professor of political science at Syracuse University, the issue is not "as much how softly the media is treating Biden as it is how harshly the media is treating President Trump."

The editorial boards at most of the top US newspapers including The New York Times and The Washington Post have endorsed Biden.

Dean Baquet, executive editor of the Times, admits that his paper's job is to "very aggressively

sort out fact from fiction" in covering Trump, while remaining "journalistically moral."

Some experts say the tougher approach to Trump is entirely merited.

"When you have a candidate that refers to the free press as the enemy and incites violence against members of the press, refuses to answer any straight questions and spills lie after lie about his record, to try to compare coverage of one candidate against the other in this situation is off-base," says Gabriel Kahn, a professor of journalism at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

But the former Washington Post and Huffington Post journalist admitted: "In a normal election cycle, problems like the ones Biden has would fuel way more media coverage than they are currently getting."

He wrote that Biden must not be lulled into a false sense of security that "he is immune to press scrutiny."

"Presidents need to be held accountable, and the period after Trump should be all about restoring accountability and transparency. That won't happen with a supine press corps."

THEFT OF US VOTER REGISTRATION INFO

Iran, Russia deny US intel report

AFP, Tehran

Iran and Russia yesterday strongly denied US allegations of having taken actions to influence public opinion ahead of the November 3 US presidential election.

Washington had accused Iran of sending "spoofed" emails to Americans "designed to intimidate voters, incite social unrest, and damage" President Donald Trump less than two weeks before the crunch vote.

According to the US Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe, Iran had also distributed a video that implies that people could send in fraudulent ballots, including from outside the United States.

Also pointing the finger at Russia, Ratcliffe said both Tehran and Moscow seek to "communicate false information to registered voters that they hope will cause confusion, sow chaos, and undermine confidence in American democracy".

Both Tehran and Moscow dismissed the accusations as "absolutely groundless."

The US announcement came after registered Democratic voters reported receiving personally addressed emails in the name of the Proud Boys militia, and from an internet domain linked to the Proud Boys.

A number of voters in Florida and other key battleground states said they had gotten the messages.

"You will vote for Trump on election day or we will come after you," the emails said.

Ratcliffe, with FBI Director Christopher Wray beside him, did not explain how the Russians and Iranians had obtained the voter information, or how the Russians might be using it.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Belarus opposition wins EU parliament rights award

The European Parliament yesterday awarded the Sakharov Prize for human rights to the movement opposing President Alexander Lukashenko in Belarus, led by the exiled Svetlana Tikhonovskaya. "It is an honour to announce that the women and men of the democratic opposition in Belarus are the 2020 Sakharov Prize laureates," tweeted European Parliament President David Sassoli. "They have on their side something that brute force can never defeat: the truth. Do not give up on your fight. We are by your side." Belarus has been gripped by unprecedented protests since Lukashenko claimed victory in an August election over Tikhonovskaya. Every Sunday, tens of thousands of Belarusians, despite the risk of arrest and the threat of live ammunition, take to the streets to oppose Europe's longest serving leader.

Pope backs civil unions for gay couples

Pope Francis on Wednesday voiced support for same-sex couples, calling them "children of God" and saying they should be allowed to have legally recognised civil unions, in a radical shift from previous pontiffs. The pope, whose opposition to gay marriage remains unchanged, said in a documentary premiered at the Rome Film Festival: "These are children of God, they have the right to a family. What we have to create is a law of civil union, they have the right to be legally protected. I have defended that," he said in film-maker Evgeny Afineevsky's "Francesco".

Egypt kills 49 in 'outrageous' mass executions: HRW

Egypt executed 49 prisoners in just 10 days in October, Human Rights Watch said yesterday, calling for authorities to "immediately halt" carrying out death sentences. "Egypt's mass executions of scores of people in a matter of days is outrageous," HRW's Joe Stork said. The rights group said it calculated the number killed between October 3 and 13 on announcements in pro-government newspapers, as executions are not typically announced, HRW said. Of the 49 killed, 15 were men convicted for alleged involvement in political violence.

Russia gives Snowden permanent residency rights

Russia has granted US whistleblower Edward Snowden permanent residency rights, his lawyer said yesterday, a step towards Russian citizenship if he wants it. Snowden, 37, fled the United States and was given asylum in Russia after leaking secret files in 2013 that revealed vast domestic and international surveillance operations carried out by the US National Security Agency where he was a contractor. US authorities have for years wanted Snowden returned to the United States to face a criminal trial on espionage charges brought in 2013.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Thai protest ban lifted

Protesters give PM three days to quit

REUTERS, Bangkok

Thailand yesterday rolled back an emergency decree aimed at ending months of protests against the government and monarchy that had only inflamed anger and brought tens of thousands of people onto Bangkok streets.

A government statement published in the official Royal Gazette said that as of 12 pm it would mean an end to measures that include bans on political gatherings of five or more people and publishing news that could affect security.

"The current violent situation that led to the announcement of the severe situation has eased and ended to a situation in which government officials and state agencies can enforce the regular laws," the statement said.

The only specific incident given for the ban was one in which Queen Suthida's convoy was jeered by protesters, but it came after protests that are the biggest challenge in years to Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha and King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

Protesters who have given Prayuth a three day deadline to quit said that withdrawing the measures was not enough.

"He's still seeking to stay in power while ignoring all the people's demands. The emergency decree shouldn't have been issued in the first place," Sirawith "Ja New" Seritiwat, one of the leaders, said.

Dozens of protesters - including many of the most high profile protest leaders - were arrested during the crackdown.

Among them was Patsaravalee "Mind" Tanakitvibulpon, who was released yesterday after being arrested a day earlier.

Protesters say Prayuth rigged an election last year to keep hold of power he seized in a 2014 coup. He says the election was fair. Protesters accuse the monarchy of enabling years of military domination and want to curb the king's powers.



One of Thailand's protest leaders, Patsaravalee "Mind" Tanakitvibulpon arrives at court after she was arrested yesterday in Bangkok, yesterday. Inset, Royalists wearing yellow shirts hold pictures of Thailand's King Maha Vajiralongkorn during a rally to support the monarchy in Bangkok.

PHOTO: REUTERS



2nd wave gloom darkens

Ireland in second lockdown as Germany faces record cases

AGENCIES

Businesses closed across Ireland yesterday for a second national coronavirus lockdown, as record infection surges in Germany and Italy helped to spread gloom across the continent.

The virus has killed more than 1.1 million people and prompted an economic downturn -- the International Monetary Fund predicting a 4.4 percent drop in global output for 2020. At least 41,304,020 cases have been registered worldwide.

On Wednesday, 6,509 new deaths and 462,751 new cases were recorded worldwide. The countries with the most new deaths were the US with 990, followed by India with 702 and Brazil with 566.

Most European governments have been reluctant to reimpose national stay-at-home orders, after previous restrictions led to deep recessions and widespread bitterness.

But Ireland's five million people have been ordered to stay at home for six weeks, with non-essential businesses told to shut up shop, among other rules.

Germany and Italy are both facing record surges, registering their highest one-day tallies since the pandemic began. Italy has ordered curfews in regions that cover the capital Rome and business hub Milan.

Most European countries have already banned large gatherings and made face masks compulsory in certain areas.

In Belgium, which has one of the worst records of virus infections per person, Foreign Minister Sophie Wilmes is being treated in intensive care after testing positive.

Meanwhile, the Indian state of West Bengal reported its biggest daily tally of new COVID-19 infections as thousands of people thronged the streets for a major Hindu festival that began last week.

West Bengal's health ministry reported 4,069 new COVID-19 cases late on Wednesday. India currently has a total of 7.71 million cases, the second highest in the world.

In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro said Wednesday his government would not in fact purchase a Chinese-developed vaccine against Covid-19, a day after his health minister announced a deal to buy millions of doses.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

India's West Bengal hits record daily cases amid festival

Bolsonaro shoots down plan to buy Chinese vaccine



Hindu devotees wearing personal protective equipment perform Dandiya, a traditional dance, in front of an idol of Hindu goddess Durga at a "pandal" or a temporary platform, on the first day of Durga Puja festival in Kolkata, India, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

AFGHAN OFFENSIVE AGAINST TALIBAN

11 kids killed as air strike hits Madrasa

AGENCIES

An air strike by the Afghan military that hit a religious school, locally called as madrasa, killed 11 children and a prayer leader, local authorities said yesterday, in an account disputed by the national government.

The assault in a village in the northeastern province of Takhar on Wednesday came amid clashes between suspected Taliban fighters and Afghan security forces in the area, according to provincial police spokesman Khalil Aseer. "The air strike was carried out when the victims were busy studying the holy book," Aseer said, adding a prayer leader was killed alongside the 11 students. He said 14 people were wounded.

But the ministry of defence -- who confirmed the strike was carried out by the Afghan air force -- denied it had left civilians dead. "Twelve Taliban including several of their commanders were killed," it said.

The ministry of defence said it had appointed a team to probe allegations of civilian casualties.

Heavy fighting with the Taliban in Takhar since Tuesday has left at least 25 security personnel dead. Despite joining peace talks with the Afghan government in Qatar last month, the Taliban have only increased violence in a bid to wield leverage in the negotiations.

Saad Hariri named new Lebanon PM

AGENCIES

Dashing hope of protesters, three-time Lebanese prime minister Saad Hariri was named to the post for a fourth time yesterday and immediately promised a government of technocrats committed to a French-backed reform plan.

He faces the grueling task of forming a cabinet in a country still reeling from the aftermath of a massive explosion that ripped through the capital in August. The country is mired in a



financial meltdown, political infighting and widespread anger at Beirut's ruling elite.

Hariri said he would "form a cabinet of non politically aligned experts with the mission of economic, financial and administrative reforms contained in the French initiative roadmap".

Hariri, who has previously led three governments in Lebanon, stepped down almost a year ago under pressure from unprecedented protests against the political class.

If Hariri succeeds in creating the next government, he will be taking on the premiership for a fourth time. A staple of the country's political class, Hariri is the son of the assassinated former PM Rafik Hariri and is the most high-profile Sunni Muslim political leader in Lebanon.

Lebanon is grappling with its worst economic crisis in decades and still reeling from the port blast that killed more than 200 people and ravaged large parts of Beirut in August.

\$1.8 BILLION ARMS SALE TO TAIWAN

China threatens retaliation

US tightens rules on more Chinese media outlets

AGENCIES

China threatened yesterday to retaliate against the latest US arms sale to Chinese-claimed Taiwan, as the island welcomed the weapons package but said it was not looking to get into an arms race with Beijing.

The Trump administration has ramped up support for Taiwan through arms sales, adding to tensions between Beijing and Washington, already heightened by rows over the South China Sea, Hong Kong, human rights and trade.

Responding to the US approval of a potential \$1.8 billion arms sale to Taiwan, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said during a daily news briefing that such sales "seriously damage China's sovereignty."

The latest US arms package includes sensors, missiles and artillery, and further congressional notifications are expected for drones made by General Atomics and land-based Harpoon anti-ship missiles, made by Boeing Co, to serve as coastal defence cruise missiles.

In another development, the US has tightened rules on six more Chinese

media organizations, saying that they are propaganda outlets that answer to the state.

The fresh move against Chinese media was met with anger in Beijing, which said it would take "necessary" countermeasures, without specifying which US outlets it might target inside its territory.

It was the third round of US designations of Chinese outlets as "foreign missions," which requires them to report details on their US-based staff and real estate transactions to the State Department. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told a news conference Wednesday that the affected outlets will face no restrictions on their reporting.

The six organizations newly designated as foreign missions are Yicai Global, Jiefang Daily, Xinmin Evening News, Social Sciences in China Press, Beijing Review and Economic Daily. The State Department earlier enforced rules on nine better-known outlets including the Xinhua news agency and China Global Television Network.

China has denounced the regulations and retaliated by expelling US citizens who work for major news organizations including The New York Times, The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal.



Volunteers of Bhalo Kajer Hotel distributing food packets among underprivileged people.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF BHALO KAJER HOTEL

Cultivating kindness as a currency

LABIBA KABIR

Md Arifur Rahman, along with his friends, has been involved in charitable work since 2009, which laid the groundwork for Bhalo Kajer Binimoye Ahar, last year.

"In one of Humayun Ahmed's television shows, the lead character, played by Zahid Hasan, made the decision to perform one good deed every day, which deeply resonated with me," says Arifur, Founder and Chief Volunteer of Bhalo Kajer Binimoye Ahar. During his university days, along with his friends, Arifur started to save BDT 10 every day, which would add up to BDT 300 from each of them at the end of a month. They divided the money and eventually put it towards medical treatment, food and academic lessons for underprivileged children. Since 2012, Arifur and his friends have spent every Eid with these kids.

They founded the Facebook group Youth for Bangladesh in 2012. Since then, they have been providing food and education to underprivileged groups. "The children around the Kamalapur Railway Station are very prone to addiction and crimes since they have no one to guide them. As a result, we decided to launch a project through which these kids could get food in exchange for their good deeds," Arifur adds.

They started the project Bhalo Kajer Binimoye Ahar in December 2019, with the goal of serving 250 to 300 people every day. Now, it has evolved into Bhalo Kajer Hotel, a mobile restaurant located beside a footpath near the Kamalapur Railway Station. It provides at least one meal to underprivileged people daily – but the catch is that they get the food in exchange for their acts of kindness. Some of these people, especially kids, like to help elders around the streets, while others try to feed



Bhalo Kajer Hotel provides food to underprivileged people in exchange for their good deeds.

stray animals or take care of the dying plants on roadsides. Then, they line up at the footpath for the meals, provided by the volunteers.

The volunteers distribute the food packages systematically, after listing down the names, deeds and ages of these people. Each week, those who are behind the best three good deeds receive gifts from the Bhalo Kajer Hotel team.

Things have not been as steady for the team during the pandemic. In these difficult times, they met people who were surviving on just water for three consecutive days and people who had money but nowhere to buy food from as the shops were closed.

4,000 volunteers work for Bhalo Kajer Hotel, following a rotation system. Around April, some of them camped out at a footpath in Badda for two and a half months to provide food to underprivileged groups, despite the health risks.

Moving forward, they plan to establish a full-fledged restaurant, where underprivileged people can come and get food, in exchange for their good deeds.



www.youthop.com

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Asian Development Bank – Japan Scholarship Program in Hawai'i, USA

The Asian Development Bank – Japan Scholarship Program (ADB-JSP) provides support for Master's degree study in ADB-JSP approved fields of study at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (UHM), and for participation in the educational, residential, and leadership development programs at the East-West Center (EWC).

DEADLINE: December 1, 2020 | Scholarships

Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia List: Nominations for class of 2021 are now open!

Forbes is looking for the best and boldest young leaders, creators and thinkers for our annual Forbes 30 Under 30 list. Founders, funders, philanthropists, foodies, filmmakers, fashionistas — now is your chance to nominate the young innovators changing the world.

DEADLINE: December 9, 2020 | Awards



Yale Young Global Scholars 2020

Yale Young Global Scholars is an unparalleled academic and leadership program at Yale University, founded on the tenets of liberal arts, renowned for its diverse and inclusive community, and committed to increasing education access. Yale Young Global Scholars empowers the next generation of leaders by building a global community and designing interdisciplinary programs that foster intellectual curiosity, deepen understanding and inspire creative action across all borders.

DEADLINE: November 10, 2020 | Scholarships



The Founder, Mansur Rahman, with the students of Khukumoni School in 2017.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KHUKUMONI FOUNDATION

Building secure futures for underprivileged children

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

Khukumoni Foundation, established by Mansur Rahman in 2016, intends to ensure better and secure childhoods for underprivileged kids. Mansur, a graduate from Jagannath University, was inspired to start the organisation after he met a child outside his campus. "I threw away a watermelon peel and saw this kid trying to eat it so I bought him a fresh piece," he said. Following this incident, he began spending time with these children. Subsequently, he started conducting regular classes for them at Suhrawardy Udyan. The organisation has five 'Khukumoni' schools, where over 500 children receive free primary education. They have also established three schools in Rajshahi, Rangpur and Barishal, intending to establish basic educational facilities across several villages.

Through their project, 'Food For All', the team is distributing cooked food among underprivileged people. Their volunteers also



Mansur Rahman distributing food packets among underprivileged people during 'Food for All' in 2018.

conduct free health campaigns to provide free treatment to slum dwellers. "These people are in real need of health counselling due to the unhygienic conditions they live in. This is a monthly project, and we have reached out to around 30,000 people so far," added Mansur.

The organisation's regular projects also include the distribution of relief materials

among flood victims in the northern parts of the country. "We've been doing this for the past three years but couldn't continue it this year due to the pandemic," said Shahadat Hossain, an active volunteer of the organisation and a student from Carmichael College, Rangpur.

During the ongoing pandemic, Khukumoni Foundation has been delivering food to around 5,000 people every day. Their volunteers are regularly collecting donations from various localities after mic announcements. Focusing their distribution drives in various slums, they are also distributing free masks and medicines. "A few of our volunteers have been recently infected with the virus, while many have recovered. Even with these risks involved, we are working to make this crisis easier for everyone," added Habibur. The organisation further intends to establish 'Khukumoni' schools across all districts and also plans to introduce skill development projects based on fisheries, agriculture and poultry farming.

How do we stop these copycat rapists?

Ending the culture of impunity of rapists is the first step

WE are horrified and outraged that only days after the horrendous gang rape of a woman in Noakhali, which the perpetrators filmed and later released the video on social media, sparking nationwide protests, two more incidents of eerily similar nature have taken place, and again in the same district.

On October 9, a pregnant woman was raped in Senbag (Noakhali) when her husband, a microbus driver, had gone out on duty. The main accused is the brother of the microbus owner and he, along with 10-12 of his cohorts, went to the woman’s home, raped her while his friends videotaped the incident, threatening to expose her on social media if she told anyone. When she went to the Upazila Parishad chairman, he said he would help get her justice. Later when reporters asked him, he said he had told her to seek help from the police. Finally, after the rape survivor filed a case, the police on Wednesday arrested four of the five accused in the case though the main accused was missing at the time.

The second incident occurred in Chatkhil (Noakhali), in which a woman whose husband works overseas was raped at gunpoint by a man who had links with the local Jubo League unit. The accused was arrested, and according to police, there are several cases against this man related to various crimes.

The implications of these rapes are frightening. Despite the vociferous protests against the first Noakhali rape (and other rapes), despite the government reacting so swiftly and announcing the death penalty for all rapes, we find that copycat rapes have occurred in the same district. The idea of videotaping the rape and releasing the clip on social media has become a new dimension of terror adding to the trauma, and nothing—not even the fear of a death sentence—is deterring it.

So what will deter these rapists? As this paper, echoing the voices of rights activists, has harped on—the first step is to end the culture of impunity of rapists through stern actions from the government. No one linked in any way to the ruling party or the administration should be shielded if they commit a crime, with a special emphasis on a crime like rape. This includes the police, local administration, local political leaders or influential individuals of the community. We are relieved that in the two cases mentioned, the police have acted swiftly and arrested some of the rapists. We hope the main accused will also be apprehended with due diligence.

But the arrest of rapists is just one step in the fight against sexual violence. The investigations must be thorough, fair and not be marred by any influence or money. The victims must be treated with extreme compassion and dignity by the legal system and the medical team that treats them and gathers evidence of rape. Protection of the victims and witnesses must be ensured. The rapists must be punished according to law and the news of their punishment should be made public. Reforms in laws about sexual violence must be initiated. While society is to be blamed for its role in shaming the rape victims instead of the rapists, the government must send out a strong message that rapists and criminals will be dealt with severely regardless of their affiliation with the ruling party and other influential groups.

How will BRTA ensure road safety when it can barely function?

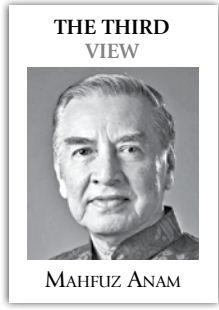
Govt must take responsibility for BRTA's woeful inadequacies

OCTOBER 22 was the National Road Safety Day and we cannot help but wonder how road safety can be ensured when the country has only 109 motor vehicle inspectors to check and give fitness clearances to the lakhs of vehicles that need inspection. Last year, these handful of inspectors gave fitness clearances to some 7.5 lakh vehicles—an inhuman task for sure. If that was not bad enough, they had to give most of the clearances manually, as the BRTA has only one digital machine for the tests.

It is nearly impossible to check the fitness of vehicles without digital machines—especially the workings of key features like headlights, brakes, and speed capabilities—and checking vehicles manually greatly compromises safety, according to experts. To add to that, none of the BRTA offices around the country have any permanent and dedicated venues to arrange driving tests. Which means, they have to hire venues for free or use classrooms and playgrounds of educational institutions. How have things come to this? After so many years since the BRTA was established, how does the organisation lack the most basic elements required for it to function, let alone function effectively? And how, then, is it supposed to ensure road safety?

The amount of apathy and lethargy with which the government has worked to equip the BRTA to handle important tasks such as granting fitness licences for vehicles and licences to drivers is shocking! No wonder we have hundreds of vehicles playing the road that actually belong in the scrapyard. No wonder we have drivers who have no business driving any vehicle whatsoever without getting much more extensive training.

We have repeatedly asked the government to extend the capacity of the BRTA in these columns over the years. And it is disappointing to know that in the last 8 years, the BRTA only managed to recruit a total of 19 people, and among them only one vehicle inspector. If things continue down this path, we are afraid that road safety will never be ensured, and thousands of people will continue to lose their lives or limbs through road accidents as a result. However, these road accidents would be completely avoidable if the government would just make the BRTA more effective.



as a “basket case” and thought of as a permanent drag by the international community—and one that has had humungous development challenges from its very inception—to come as far as we have is, by all standards, a remarkable achievement. The latest IMF’s World Economic Outlook puts us ahead of India in terms of per capita GDP by the end of the year. Obviously, this further strengthens our credentials as achievers.

But how is our coming of age to be measured? Is it just by per capita income or GDP figures or such indices? There are many other such numbers that show us in a favourable light. They are all very important and we are proud of those achievements. But what about some other signs of development—decent and safe roads, clean air, a dependable public transport system, safe water supply, reliable public healthcare, public education measured not by quantity but quality, and most importantly, safety for women? What about freedom of speech, right to dissent and right to assemble peacefully? What about the way we treat the individual human being who has been reduced to a mere statistic? For example, we lustily wait for money from our expatriate workers and yet unjustly, and some would say illegally, imprison them when they return having lost everything, not to mention the sufferings we put them through when things go wrong. Have we advanced in these areas as we have done in others?

Permit me to focus on something very specific. A sight that I find particularly offensive and demeaning as a citizen of a free and independent country is that of the police routinely attacking groups of demonstrators with batons as if they are nothing more than an aggregate of flesh and bones to be beaten, injured, maimed and brutalised in every possible way, without the slightest acknowledgement that they are citizens of an independent country with specific legal rights and entitled to minimum dignity and respect. The footage we see on television and photographs that we regularly publish of these incidents in this newspaper and others make me feel as if we are still in the colonial era when white Saheb-run police would swoop down on the brown natives, breaking their bones, because they had the temerity to “demand”. How dare they! Twice freed—once from the British and



Americans believe that it is not focussed on major issues (59 against 39 percent) and that it is too negative (51 against 31 percent).

The opinion polls are hinting at a Democratic win, with persistent leads in polls in the swing states too. In Pennsylvania, a key state taken by the Republicans in 2016, Donald Trump’s numbers are reported to be sliding back further, giving Joe Biden a 7-point lead.

With about two weeks remaining before the election, these figures can change further, and one should not be surprised if the end game turns out to be different and nasty.

There have been persistent claims by President Donald Trump (without any evidence) of past rigging in postal ballots. This, some argue, is his way of preparing the ground for such action by his own party. The recent appearance of “illegal” and unofficial ballot boxes in churches and Republican offices in California to collect ballot papers hints at vote rigging. But it is difficult to imagine vote rigging and election-related violence in a country like the USA with its strong institutions, democracy, and rule of law. But recent events and the possibility of Trump using newly raised special forces to tame “violence” do not exclude such possibilities.

The demonstrations after the death of George Floyd and their suppression in the hands of police can be an indication of how nasty things may turn out to be. The stakes in the case of a presidential election are much higher, and in the event of any anomaly with the voting process, the scale of protest can be high.

Trump’s survival in his roller coaster

Why do our protesters get beaten up?

‘Development’ must also be of values

then from the Pakistanis—we still have not accepted the fact that every citizen has the right to inquire, question, demand and, when necessary, protest. We decry the colonial attitude in so many things but when it comes to treating a demonstration, the old colonial way of police brutality is still the norm—a police whose salary, uniform, every perk, and even the baton they beat us with are paid for by our tax money.

This is such an irony. The protest culture was almost a tradition for us, and it is rooted in our anti-colonial, anti-Pakistan and anti-military dictatorship struggles. Today’s democracy—whatever is left of it—is the direct result of the anti-autocracy movement against the Ershad regime. Yet this tradition now lies in tatters, partly due to misuse but more so because of the present anti-democratic attitude and the

independence. Are we going to enter it with this medieval attitude towards dissent? We have been independent for nearly half a century—no foreign ruler to extract our riches, no “superior race” to make us feel inferior and distort our values, no external master to rob us of our dignity, no hidden hands to divide and rule us. Why then have we not been able to introduce a minimum level of civility and decency in handling demonstrations where our people can be guaranteed a minimum level of respect?

Recently, a group of left-leaning students and civil society members organised a “Long March” from Dhaka to Noakhali to protest against the growing incidents of violence against women. On their way, at Feni, they were attacked and the buses that were carrying them were vandalised by AL activists with the police either quickly following suit or watching the mayhem

under police attack. In 2018, a student’s demonstration against the quota system in government jobs faced police brutality, this time joined by the AL goons. Then school students, triggered into agitation by the sudden death of two fellow students under the wheels of a recklessly driven bus, spontaneously started the “Road Safety” movement. It was allowed for the first few days, and when the government saw it gathering momentum, it unleashed the police and party thugs against young students. Last year, a simple demonstration by jute workers demanding their arrears was attacked by the law enforcers. This year, state jute mill workers came under heavy police attack while they were demonstrating for their separation payments.

It is clear from the above instances—and there are numerous others that we



A group of left-leaning students and civil society members organised a two-day “Long March” from Dhaka to Noakhali to protest against the growing incidents of violence against women. They came under attack on the second day, in Feni, on October 17, 2020.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

resultant suppressive measures adopted. I will be the first one to admit that on some occasions these civic movements turned violent and did result in destruction of properties and loss of lives. However, by and large, our tradition of mass demonstration has been peaceful, and on the occasions that it turned violent, it was more due to police action and the presence of police agents and saboteurs within.

The saddest aspect of our present protest culture is the near-destruction of our student politics, which is among our most glorious heritage. What happened to it, and why, is a subject for another day.

As long as we are peaceful, we are within our constitutional rights to hold protests. Why then is there so much brutality towards the demonstrators? Next year, we will celebrate the 50 years of our

from a distance. The protesters were subsequently able to reach Noakhali and complete their programme without any further incident.

This attack on protesters was not an isolated event. The agitation for workers’ safety rights following the infamous Rana Plaza incident was attacked by the police in 2013. In the following year, a protest against the coal mine in Barapukuria ended in police violence. In 2015, a demonstration by private university students against VAT on their tuition fees was set upon by the police, and many homes were raided and a number of students arrested. Many are still entangled in court cases even after several years have passed. In the same year, a protest against the Rampal coal power plant titled “Road March to Save the Sundarbans” came

did not cite due to space constraints—that the spontaneous agitations of general students later joined by the public at large all ended up under police baton, resulting in serious injuries, court cases, and arrests. Generally, the demonstrators are looked upon as enemies and, as such, have to be crushed and done so with brute force. Today, people are not only NOT allowed to protest but they are also treated with insult, humiliation and violence.

Tolerance of dissent is the primary cause of such brutal treatment of agitations. It could also come from fear... fear that if demonstrations are not nipped in the bud, they may grow into serious threats to the regime. The history of such fears is that they are often self-fulfilling.

Mahfuz Anam is Editor and Publisher, The Daily Star.

The end game of Trump politicking



Americans believe that it is not focussed on major issues (59 against 39 percent) and that it is too negative (51 against 31 percent).

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Trump’s survival in his roller coaster

business career with reported failures and his massive “outstanding loans”, both to local and foreign financial institutions, testify to his dark business instincts and skills. His navigation through the maze of tax laws, having paid only USD 750 in 2016 and 2017 each, and not disclosing the tax returns during the pre-2016 election process reflect his “skills and smartness”.

Trump has indeed whipped up extreme emotions among the American people as well as among many around the world. He



US President Donald Trump.

PHOTO: REUTERS

is seen as an egoistic, self-serving person, a tax dodger, five times draft evader, and a sexist with very low respect for women. But he is also praised as smart and intelligent. Trump has “saved the United States”, says former Trump adviser Steve Bannon. He’s one of the “smartest, cleverest and most successful” presidents, says Fox’s Jeanine Pirro. But he was also labelled “dumb and racist” by comedian Seth Meyers, and is guilty of “rampant corruption,” according to commentators on MSNBC.

Caroline Giuliani, daughter of New York’s ex-mayor Rudy Giuliani, wrote in an op-ed in Vanity Fair that Trump’s policies are breaking families apart and that if being the daughter of a polarising mayor has taught her anything, “it is that corruption starts with ‘yes-men’ and women, the cronies who create an echo

chamber of lies and subservience.”

Trump created a lots of chaos this year, starting with the handling of Covid-19 and then peaceful protests of the “Black Lives Matter” movement. And in the process, America started counting deaths, around 230,000 by now. The Covid-19 death toll in the USA is expected to increase by another 160-170 thousand by February next year. Trump’s show of force against the peaceful protests of George Floyd’s killing also instigated violence.

And the last and the most damaging act he has engaged in is his nomination of a conservative judge, Amy Barrett, a month before the presidential election. This has never happened before. Abraham Lincoln, facing a similar situation, decided against a nomination in the election year, and Barack Obama’s choice was blocked by the Republicans in the 2016 election year.

Donald Trump seems to have a three-pronged strategy for his re-election campaign. His first strategy has been to claim that Covid-19 is a hoax, and therefore there is no need to impose lockdowns, and hence avoid lockdowns and further unemployment. In so doing, he undermined his own health officials, but paid a heavy price through counting many more avoidable deaths.

The second strategy has been to reach

the far right and white supremacist groups, and whip up their sentiments against immigration, the Chinese for giving Covid-19 to the USA and for taking their jobs (through unfair trade practices). He refused to condemn the white supremacists, only managing to say “stand back and stand by” when repeatedly pushed by the moderator Chris Wallace during the first presidential debate. He expects his call to “Make America Great Again” will again reverberate through American heartlands and the swing states. He engaged in orchestrating misinformation. Mary McCord, a former federal prosecutor and now a Georgetown law professor, noted that Donald Trump has become “the greatest threat to our democracy”.

The third and most damaging strategy has been to systematically undermine the neutrality of the judiciary through the nomination of Republican-favoured judges, sponsored by the shadowy right-wing networks, and eventually the nomination of Amy Barret to the Supreme Court. The composition of the nine-panel judge with a 6:3 ratio favourable to the conservatives can be of much comfort to the Republicans.

The Republican strategy to tinker with the judiciary also included the elimination of the system of civil judiciary, which is protected by law against any corruption. In the confirmation hearing, Sheldon Whitehouse, a Democratic senator, revealed how dark money was playing a role in putting people of influence in right places in the judiciary of America.

Violence can break out between armed right-wing groups and the moderates in case the election results do not go in favour of Donald Trump. He has asked his supporters to “protect” polling centres for him. And in case of “contentious claims on results and election frauds”, the Republicans can expect to get a favourable hearing in the Supreme Court.

The end game of Trump politicking may not succeed in putting him back in the presidential seat, but he is not going to go out without a fight.

Dr Atiqur Rahman is an economist, ex-adjunct professor at the John Cabot University, Rome, and ex-Lead Strategist of IPAD, Rome, Italy.

Roger Penrose, Black Holes and the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physics



QUAMRUL HAIDER

THREE scientists have been awarded the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physics. They are the British mathematical physicist Roger Penrose, German astrophysicist Reinhard Genzel, and American astronomer

Andrea Ghez. Penrose, a professor at Oxford University, is recognised for his research on black holes carried out in the 1960s. According to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Penrose has been honoured “for the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of [Albert Einstein’s] general theory of relativity.” Professors Genzel of Max Planck Institute and Ghez of the University of California in Los Angeles were awarded the prize “for the discovery of a supermassive compact object” in a region called Sagittarius A*, located at the centre of our galaxy, The Milky Way.

The criteria for awarding Nobel Prize in Physics are defined in specific terms. Alfred Nobel’s will stipulates that the prize should be awarded “to the person who made the most important discovery or invention in the field of physics.” The crucial words in the will are “discovery” and “invention.” It is arguable whether developing a theory can be considered a discovery per se, but it is certainly not an invention in the sense that we normally associate an invention with. That is why the prize is seldom given to theoretical physicists, unless their theory is testable or verifiable.

When theorists won the prize by themselves, for example John Bardeen, Leon Cooper and Robert Schrieffer for their theory of superconductivity, it was for a

major theoretical formulation of an existing phenomenon, and thus can be considered as part of the “discovery” of that phenomenon. And theoretical physicists Peter Higgs and François Englert were awarded the Nobel Prize after the particle—Higgs Boson—predicted by their theory to complement the Standard Model of the Universe was experimentally detected.

While the awards to Genzel and Ghez are incontrovertible because they fit Nobel’s criteria quite nicely, Penrose is a rather unusual choice in that his award is not for a discovery. It is for using ingenious mathematical methods to reveal the implications of Einstein’s tour de force—the intimidatingly difficult-to-comprehend Theory of General Relativity.

However, long before Penrose’s prize-winning work on black holes, German physicist Karl Schwarzschild provided the proof of their existence just less than two months after Einstein published the general relativity equations in 1915. By solving the equations exactly, he identified a radius, known as the Schwarzschild radius that defines the horizon or boundary of a voracious gravitational sinkhole—a single point of zero volume and infinite density.

If a massive object could be compressed to fit within the Schwarzschild radius, which is three kilometres per solar mass, no known force could stop it from collapsing into the sinkhole. Today, we call this sinkhole a black hole. His work formed the basis for later studies of black holes, showing that the concentration of matter in a black hole is so great that no light could escape its staggering gravitational pulls, but rather follow a trajectory curving back towards the black hole, thereby making it unobservable.

Lest we forget, Einstein did not win the Nobel Prize for his revolutionary work on



From left to right: Roger Penrose, Reinhard Genzel, and Andrea Ghez.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

general relativity or special relativity. The Nobel Committee decided against them on grounds that the relativity theories were abstract and unproven, although observational proof of general relativity was provided in 1919 by the Cambridge astrophysicist Arthur Eddington. He famously measured the deflection of starlight passing near the Sun during a total solar eclipse. The deflection, known as gravitational lensing, resulted from warping of space, as predicted by general relativity. Instead, Einstein received the deferred 1921 prize in 1922 for his 1905 quantum interpretation of the photoelectric effect because it can be attributed to the discovery of the effect—emission of electrons from metal surfaces under certain illuminations—by the German physicist Heinrich Rudolph Hertz in 1887.

Despite his fame and impact on theoretical physics, Nobel Prize eluded the brilliant

physicist, mathematician and cosmologist Stephen Hawking, even though there is a general consensus that he has done more than anyone else since Einstein to deepen our knowledge about the cosmos. As noted by Penrose, a Nobel Prize for Hawking would have been “well-deserved” yet was possibly held back by the committee’s desire to honour observable, rather than theoretical scientific studies that are difficult, or almost impossible, to verify experimentally. Penrose’s work, albeit monumental and worthy of the Nobel Prize, cannot also be experimentally verified because of the very nature of the topics. So why relax requirements for work which are mostly theorems, some hypothesised in collaboration with Hawking?

Penrose is not the first scientist to predict the existence of black holes. The idea of black holes dates back even before Schwarzschild, to 1783, when an English cleric and amateur

scientist named John Michell and more than a decade later French mathematician Pierre-Simon Laplace used a thought experiment to explain that light would not leave the surface of a very massive star if the gravitation was sufficiently large. Michell called them “dark stars.”

In 1930, during a long voyage to London, 19-year-old Indian astrophysicist Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar showed via calculations that when a massive star runs out of fuel, it would blow itself apart in a spectacularly violent explosion into a black hole. He received the Nobel Prize in 1983, not for his work on black holes, but for “studies of the physical processes of importance to the structure and evolution of the stars.”

For decades, the concept of black holes was no more than a mathematical aberration. They are well-nigh impossible to detect because light, one of our cosmic messengers, cannot escape from black holes. Hence, there is a total information blackout. How do we then infer about their existence? As the physics of black holes developed through the years, physicists realised that indirect routes were available. Consequently, our current understanding of black holes is built on inference drawn from data collected by X-ray, optical and radio telescopes.

Indeed, their existence was eventually confirmed in 1971 when astronomers detected a hint of radio wave emissions coming from an object in the constellation Cygnus. The emissions were later interpreted as the fingerprint of the black hole Cygnus X-1. Since then, numerous black holes, including supermassive ones, have been detected in our galaxy and elsewhere in the Universe.

Quamrul Haider is a Professor of Physics at Fordham University, New York.

‘The India Way’ by S. Jaishankar: A must read



been a career diplomat for more than four decades, Jaishankar has had a ringside view of the evolution of India’s foreign policy as it moved and adapted to the various twists and turns on the global stage, both near and far, since the country’s independence in 1947. His representation of India as an ambassador in key missions like Beijing and Washington, DC—both of which form an integral part in India’s foreign policy—and his assignments in Moscow and Japan, among others, have served to enrich his first-hand knowledge and his experience as a diplomat. All this culminated with his appointment as India’s foreign secretary in 2015, an assignment that put him in the position of a kingpin in the execution of its foreign policy. This coincided with a period when regional and global geo-politics continued to shift at breakneck speed and, more often than not, followed an unpredictable pattern, while India’s relevance continued to gain currency in all these theatres and through all these stages. Now as its External Affairs Minister, Jaishankar has graduated from being a foreign policy practitioner to a maker of foreign policy. This ensures a continuity of his pivotal role in the domain of the management of India’s external relations. The book is pre-Galwan, and so the part of it that relates to India-China relations needs to be seen in that context.

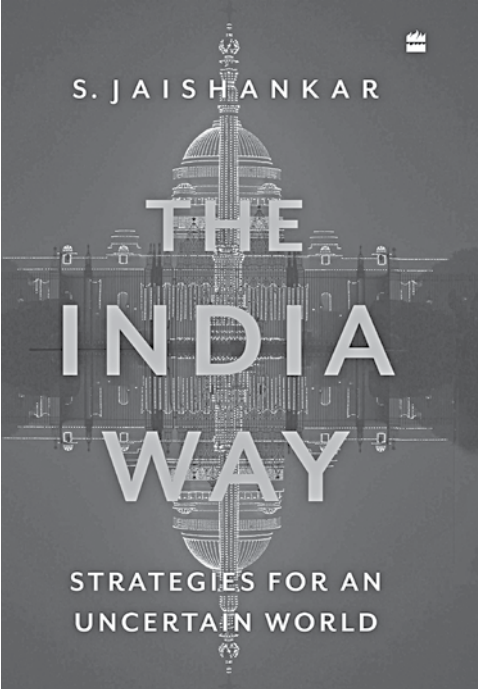
The richness of the book derives from the fact that the author has dwelled not so much on his own experiences as a diplomat, as many tend to do, but on India and the choices it made in the realm of foreign policy over a considerably long period of

time. Jaishankar has been most objective and candid in his assessment of where it did right and where it did not. As an example, he mentions, on more than one occasion, the positive impact that India’s role in Bangladesh’s Liberation War in 1971 had on India’s stature as a player not just in the immediate and peripheral region but also on the global stage, with an emphasis on the manner in which it was executed diplomatically and militarily. In the same breath, he describes India’s Sri Lanka exercise as a “misadventure”, one that failed to take into account the ground realities of local political and social sensitivities and the adverse military realities on the ground.

In the early part of the book, Jaishankar prescribes, from his vantage position, that the current time is one when India must engage America, manage China, cultivate Europe, reassure Russia, bring Japan into play, draw neighbours in, extend the neighbourhood and expand the traditional constituencies of support. He then goes on to elaborate on these goals in greater detail in the subsequent chapters.

Such a broad tapestry, needless to say, presents a major challenge for the policymakers, more so when some of the goals appear to be paradoxical, if not contradictory. However, the author strongly feels that if India were to continue to emerge as a consequential player in a multi-polar Asia, and in a shifting global order, it must be able to multi-task its foreign policy operations in a manner that will enable it to achieve its objectives and meet its own national interests in the short, mid and long terms. He says that such a bold approach may call for “plunging into the unknown”, which requires both judgement and courage. In a nuanced assessment of the past, he says that while the past may be an influence, it can no longer be a determinant of the future. In the same vein, he states that timidity cannot be passed off as a strategy nor indecision as wisdom.

Jaishankar expands on this by referring to a failed opportunity to settle the



“The India Way”, published by Harper Collins.

boundary and territorial issues with China in the early 1950s when the People’s Republic was globally more isolated, or for delaying India’s arrival on the nuclear platform until 1998 and not shortly after 1974. On the positive side, he describes the nuclear deal with the United States following long and hard bargaining as a major feather in India’s cap. On the latter, India demonstrated its determination to keep its options open while not being seen as a threat or a source of further nuclear proliferation. He also advocates that when it comes to matters of security, the country’s idealistic commitments, like the one to non-alignment, must not act as an impediment to India adopting a robust, proactive stance. He appropriately cites India’s position and its firmness to act, as it did in 1971 on the Bangladesh issue, as a case in point.

In chapter 4 of the book, titled “Dogmas

of Delhi”, Jaishankar spells out the evolution of India’s foreign policy making in six phases, starting with the time of independence in 1947 and reaching up to the present. This is basically a collage of its successes and failures. His description of failures includes the military defeat to China in 1962, and the inconclusive war with Pakistan in 1965. The triumphs include the victory in 1971 leading to the birth of an independent Bangladesh, the 1998 nuclear empowerment, and the 2002 nuclear deal with the US. This particular chapter, at least to me, represents the soul of the book, especially because of its prescriptive form. He suggests that a power that is serious about self-improvement should not shrink from undertaking an honest introspection regarding missed chances and shortcomings. Only through such an exercise, he believes, can the future courses of action be better planned and executed. He explains the seeming dichotomies in India’s multiple bilateral or multilateral arrangements as a willingness to look beyond dogmas and enter “the real world of convergences”.

As is to be expected, a complete chapter of the book talks of India’s long and most troublesome relationship with China, its neighbour to the north. He traces the history of the passage of this critical relationship, one whose ramifications do not remain limited to the two players only but spread deeply into the neighbourhood and far beyond, both on the land and in the sea. While covering the undulating nature and the difficult bilateral trajectory of this relationship in the current complicated global context, Jaishankar states that the challenge for India is to manage a more powerful neighbour while ensuring its own rise. The Galwan skirmishes in May this year, leading to military casualties on both sides for the first time in many decades, have thrown in a very different element into an already difficult equation. In the face of hardening nationalist sentiments on both sides following Galwan, policymakers may need to go back to the drawing board to face

the future.

In the book, Jaishankar describes the multifaceted nature of India’s relations with the United States and the challenges and opportunities therein. India’s difficult ties with Pakistan, both bilaterally and in the context of China’s place in it, find due mention.

The author argues strongly for a sustained and vibrant engagement with Japan by India that will augment the existing diplomatic ties with security arrangements. For an India that is moving forward in the Indo-Pacific region, this makes perfect sense. Importantly, the book balances well the importance of its relations with the bigger global players as much as it should with its immediate and smaller neighbours. He emphasises that an India growing in strength needs a friendly neighbourhood.

The book is aptly rounded up with a summary of the imponderables that the coronavirus has thrown up globally. Jaishankar argues that the pandemic that still shows no sign of letting up has made it abundantly imperative for all to find common ground on the very questions that are today sources of contention.

“The India Way” is a well-choreographed compilation of taking stock of past events and actions, placing them in the present context, and helping them shape the future course of India’s foreign policy. Given the richness of its contents, its objective form and candid expressions, it’s a must read as much for the current and future generations of India’s foreign policy practitioners as it is for the policymakers. Diplomatic and global political analysts outside the country will also find it a very useful book to study.

Dr. S. Jaishankar does not hesitate to admit that while India may be a rising power, it clearly has a long distance to go. It is this sense of pragmatic realism that makes the book a product of high quality scholarly work.

Shamsheer M Chowdhury, BB, is a former foreign secretary of Bangladesh.

QUOTABLE
Quote

RAY BRADBURY
(1920 - 2012)
American author.

*We are cups, constantly
and quietly being filled.
The trick is, knowing
how to tip ourselves
over and let the
beautiful stuff out.*

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Clumps of grass
6 Social blunder
11 Bay
12 Soothe
13 Dinero
14 Penniless
15 Radius
17 Has debts
18 Grant of films
20 Ontario,
for one
22 Dull existence
23 Sicilian port
26 Stood
28 Noble gas
29 Tippling
accounts
31 Greedy desire

32 Spill the beans
33 Low card
34 Motor sound
36 Walked over
38 King or czar
40 Outdo
43 Cold house
44 Good judgment
45 Breakfast bread
46 Plus

DOWN
1 Director Burton
2 First numero
3 Thin flatbread
4 Tube, to Brits
5 Ollie's pal
6 Talker's gift
7 TV weatherman
8 Spots with beds

9 Bogus
10 Peepers
16 In the style of
18 Beach crawler
19 Mystique
21 "Woe is me!"
23 Ring
24 Lawn tunneler
25 Just
27 Sound systems
30 Diner sandwich
33 Musical sounds
34 Legal paper
35 Sci-fi award
37 Parks in civil-
rights history
39 Nonsense
41 Take advantage
of
42 Sulky state

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10-16

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

F	A	C	E	S	C	A	R	A	B
A	L	A	N	A	L	P	A	C	A
M	E	T	S	T	A	P	P	E	D
E	X	C	U	S	E	M	E		
			H	R	S		P	A	P
S	L	E	E	T		S	L	A	T
L	O	S				T	A	D	
U	S	U	R	P		F	A	C	T
R	E	P	E	L		A	S	H	
				M	A	S	T	H	E
C	O	R	O	N	A		O	S	L
U	N	I	T	E	S		R	U	I
B	E	G	E	T	S		E	P	E

BEETLE BAILEY

BY MORT WALKER

WHAT'S THIS? SOMEDAY WE MAY HAVE TO FIGHT IN EXTREME WILDERNESS CONDITIONS

BABY BLUES

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

I THINK SOMEONE MIGHT HAVE A CRASH ON THEIR TEACHER

Wholesalers

FROM PAGE 12
section of businessmen sensed that a crisis was coming.

As the prices of the tuber kept on rising, the businessmen bought potato stocks in cold storages in the last few weeks at higher rates hoping to make a hefty profit.

At a meeting with businessmen and members of the cold storage association, the Department of Agriculture Marketing (DAM) on October 20 fixed potato prices at Tk 35 a kg for retailers, Tk 30 for wholesalers and Tk 27 at cold storage level.

According to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), potatoes were sold for Tk 40 to Tk 45 a kg at different retail markets in the capital yesterday, up from Tk 20 to Tk 25 a kg a year ago.

Md Muslem, owner of Urmi Banijjyalay at the capital's Shyambazar wholesale market, said hoarders now fear that they may incur a huge loss as the government has already fixed the prices.

He said he sold his total stock at a cold storage about 12 days ago. He, however, did not disclose the amount.

Yesterday, Muslem was wholesaling a stock from another cold storage.

While talking to this correspondent, he received a call from a hoarder in Bogura. The two exchanged heated words over the phone.

"I am selling potato for Tk 30 a kg as per the government's directives, but he [hoarder] is pressing me to sell it at a higher rate."

Muslem said hoarders were threatening him of stopping the supply if he did not comply.

Echoing the views of Muslem, another wholesaler Nurul Haq at Shyambazar said he was receiving similar threats.

He said potatoes at cold storages in Munshiganj and Rajshahi were sold for Tk 32 a kg and Tk 33 a kg respectively yesterday.

"If the hoarders can sell potatoes at higher prices there, then why would they send it to Dhaka?" questioned Haq, also the cashier of Potato Wholesalers Association in Shyambazar.

On Wednesday afternoon, the association in a meeting decided to follow the government-fixed rate.

Wholesalers at Shyambazar yesterday sold potatoes at the rate fixed by the government (Tk 30 a kg). However, retailers at the same market were found selling the vegetable for Tk 39 to Tk 40 a kg.

Hanif Mia, owner of New Mohanagar Arot at Shyambazar, said a new potato crop usually starts hitting the markets during this period of the year.

"But the situation is different this year. Farmers are yet to sow seeds in many districts due to prolonged rain. Hoarders know it very well that it will take another two months for growers to harvest the new crop. That's why they have slowed the supply of potatoes to markets," he said.

Wholesalers have urged the government to strengthen its monitoring of potato supplies from cold storages to cool down potato prices.

Talking to The Daily Star, Mozammel Hoque Choudhury, secretary of Bangladesh Cold Storage Association, said a section of businessmen slowed the supply of potatoes from cold storages to make an extra profit.

In a letter issued on Wednesday, the association asked the cold storage owners and stockists to take steps to ensure smooth supply of potatoes and cooperate with the government officials and agencies concerned in this regard.

About 393 private cold storages are operating in the country and around half have potato stocks, according to the association.

'This isn't a reality show'

FROM PAGE 12
November.

At the drive-in rally in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, one of a handful of battleground states expected to decide the election, Obama lashed out at Trump's behavior and declared him "incapable of taking the job seriously."

But he also issued a stark reminder of 2016, when opinion polls showed Hillary Clinton as the clear favorite -- only for her and her supporters to be shocked by a Trump victory on election day.

"We can't be complacent. I don't care about the polls," the former two-term president told the rally outside a baseball stadium.

"There were a whole bunch of polls last time. Didn't work out. Because a whole bunch of folks stayed at home.

And got lazy and complacent. Not this time. Not in this election."

He told supporters that too much was at stake to have four more years of Trump leading the nation, seeking to contrast his successor -- a Republican real estate mogul and ex-reality TV star -- with his former vice president.

"This is not a reality show. This is reality," Obama said. "And the rest of us have had to live with the consequences of him proving himself incapable of taking the job seriously."

Obama, who governed for two terms and remains one of the most popular figures in the Democratic Party, blasted Trump for his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, noting that the president himself had fallen victim to the virus.

Three girls raped

FROM PAGE 12
raping a woman and filming the scene in Noakhali, has been arrested and expelled from the party.

In Savar, a 12-year-old was raped by her neighbour Mizanur Rahman on Wednesday, said police.

Saiful Islam, inspector (investigation) of Savar Model Police Station, said the victim went out of home early morning. On her way, Mizanur picked her up, confined her at a rented flat in the area and raped her.

Yesterday morning, the victim's father filed a case against Mizanur and the rented flat owner's son Shariful Islam. Shariful was made an accused for helping Mizanur, the police official said.

Police could not arrest any of the duo till yesterday evening.

In Narayanganj, an 11-year-old girl was raped by her neighbour in the district's Shiddhirganj on Wednesday, said police.

The victim has known accused Nasir, 19, from before. On Wednesday evening, he took her to an isolated place and raped her. Two of Nasir's friends helped him in the rape, said Kamrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Shiddhirganj Police Station.

The victim's mother filed a case against four, three of whom were juveniles, he said, adding that all of the accused were arrested and produced before court with five-day remand plea each.

In Mymensingh, members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-14) arrested rape accused Zakaria, 20, in the district's Sadar upazila.

Jonaed Afrad, senior assistant superintendent of police who is currently posted to Rab-14, said Zakaria offered sedative mixed curd to

the 17-year-old girl and later raped her. In Noakhali, Jubo League leader Mujibur Rahman Sharif, accused of raping a woman and filming the scene, has been expelled from the party following his arrest.

Chatkhil upazila unit Jubo League convener Mohammad Ullah Patwary and the same unit's joint convener Sajjad Hossain announced the expulsion through a press statement.

Early Wednesday, Sharif forcibly entered into the victim's room, raped her at knife-point and filmed the scene. The 29-year-old woman is a wife of a Saudi-expatriate and a mother of two.

Sharif was the president of Noakhola union unit Jubo League under the same upazila. He was accused in eight criminal cases, said police.

Police taking Sharif along with them raided different spots in the area on Wednesday night and recovered a pistol, two-round of bullets, five cans of beer, a laptop and condoms.

He was then produced before a court with a total of 20-day remand prayer in three cases. Of these, first case was filed allegedly for rape, second in pornography act and third for possession of illegal firearms.

In the district's Begumganj upazila, police arrested Sirajul Islam, 65, retired sergeant, and his son Mahbub, 35, following a rape case filed by a woman.

In the case, the woman mentioned, Sirajul Islam promised to find a job for her and marry her. But later he denied it. His son Mahbub threatened her and took her signature on a white paper as she forced Sirajul to marry her.

[Our Correspondents from Savar, Narayanganj and Noakhali contributed to this report]

Nepali firm likely to buy

FROM PAGE 12
"We wrote to Anmol stating that we will supply the vaccine once it passes the trials," Dr Mohammad Mohiuddin, manager (quality and regulatory operations) at Globe, told The Daily Star.

Nepal will buy BANCOCVID "for sure" after its successful clinical trials, the ambassador told journalists at the Globe facility.

"We anticipate that this vaccine will be cheaper [for Nepal]. Another reason is the dominant virus strain in South Asia, which is causing the infections, is the same in Bangladesh and Nepal... So this vaccine will be more effective," Banshidhar said, adding that his government is exploring other sources of vaccine as well.

Globe Chairman Harunur Rashid said different foreign governments and corporations have shown interest in BANCOCVID.

"Orders of some 20 million doses are in the pipeline," Harunur said.

Globe Biotech on July 2 announced that it had been developing a Covid-19 vaccine and "had successfully completed the preliminary animal trials".

On October 5, the company announced it had received "very promising" results from the pre-clinical trials on rabbits and mice and were ready for clinical trials.

On October 15, three Covid-19 vaccine candidates, including BANCOCVID, were included in the draft landscape of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b) is going to administer human trials.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the icddr,b and the Globe on October 15.

24 more die

FROM PAGE 12
infections, raising the total number of confirmed cases to 3,94,827.

Bangladesh is currently 17th in the list of worst affected countries in the world in terms of the number of cases.

The position is one step ahead Italy and one step behind Germany, according to worldometer. info.

After testing total of 14,958 samples yesterday, the positivity rate stood at 11.34 percent.

With this, the overall positivity rate stands at 17.77 percent.

In the meantime, 1,687 Covid-19 patients have recovered, taking the total number of recoveries to 3,10,532, which is 78.65 percent of all confirmed cases.

Among the 24 dead, 18 were male and six were female and all of them died in hospitals.

One of them was aged between 21 and 30 years, two between 41 and 50, eight between 51 and 60 and the remaining 13 were above 60, added the release.

Misery mounts for Italy

FROM PAGE 12
"My employer is insisting that I return sooner," said Mosharraf, adding that he works at a restaurant in Palermo.

"I could lose the job if my return is delayed," he said.

He has been searching for a ticket for the past few days and will try to get a refund from the Turkish Airlines after he reaches Italy, he said.

Italy recently withdrew its flight embargo for Bangladeshis with valid stay permits.

Turkish Airlines, Qatar Airways and Emirates then started carrying Bangladeshi passengers to Italy. However, only Biman will operate a direct flight to Rome.

Zubair Khandaker said he had been trying to get his Turkish Airlines

return ticket re-issued. But rather than waiting any longer, he went to the Biman office yesterday to get a ticket for the special flight.

Zubair, who is from Brahmanbaria, said he came home in August last year and was supposed to return in May. His Italian stay permit will remain valid for a year from now.

"I am facing financial hardship at home. I want to go back now," he said.

Md Asif Molla, who lives in Napoli, said he came home on September 3 last year and was supposed to return in February.

However, he extended his vacation till April 2 to attend a family programme and subsequently got stuck amid the pandemic.

Son 'kills mother over property'

FROM PAGE 12
Huma suggested that his mother sell some of the land that Belal owned to pay back the money, but she refused. This angered Huma, who then planned to kill his mother, Noakhali Superintendent of Police (SP) Md Alamgir Hossain said.

After police recovered the body parts, Huma filed a murder case with police on October 8 accusing unknown people of killing his mother.

Fifteen days later, police arrested five suspected killers, including Huma, yesterday and arranged a press briefing where they said Huma was the one who planned the killing and executed it with the aid of six friends.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Chattogram Range Md Anwar Hossain and SP Alamgir briefed journalists at his office.

DIG Anwar said three arrestees, including the prime accused Huma,

confessed to the killing before a court under section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure yesterday.

After interrogating the arrestees, police recovered a kitchen cleaver, a machete, a shovel, a pillow and a shari that was worn by the victim.

Anwar said the body was recovered over two days, and on the second day, Huma filed the murder case.

"Several police teams led by SP Alamgir worked for 15 days to unearth the clueless murder. They [were able to] identify the killers and recover the weapons used in the killing," he said.

When SP Alamgir consulted locals, police suspected Huma's involvement in the killing. With the investigation going on, they first detained Huma's friend Nirob, 26.

Acting on information from Nirob, police arrested Huma's neighbour Nur Islam Kashai, 38, and recovered

After failing to get his return ticket from Turkish Airlines reissued on time, he went to buy a Biman ticket.

"I will be able to earn the money if I get to work there for a month," said Asif, adding that his stay permit will expire early next year.

He came to Dhaka from his village in Madaripur's Shibchar four days ago to look for a ticket.

Asked about the hefty ticket price, Biman Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Mokabbir Hossain said the plane which will be used for the special flight will not carry any passenger when it returns from Rome.

Nearly 15,000 people are desperately waiting to return to their workplaces in the European country.

Bangladesh will attend Colombo

FROM PAGE 12
The UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim is considering the question of sending his representative to Pakistan to look into the conditions of Bangalees there. This is stated today by a UN spokesperson. It may be recalled that Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in a telegram earlier this month to the secretary general expressed grave concern of the government and people of Bangladesh about the precarious conditions of the Bangalees stranded in Pakistan. He also requested him to use his good offices to secure the expeditious return of the Bangalees and save them from persecution.

SCARCITY OF CEMENT
Construction work all over Bangladesh

has been held up for poor availability and sky-high price of cement without which no development work can be undertaken. It is gathered that the yearly requirements of cement for the whole of Bangladesh is six lakh tonnes. Of this total requirement only one lakh tonne is available locally and the rest is to be imported. The Bangladesh government has made contracts with Korea and India for the supply of four lakh tonnes of cement. It is hoped that after a sizeable quantity of cement against these agreements reaches Bangladesh, the situation will greatly improve provided there is no defect in the distribution system.

SOURCES: October 24, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Senate body

FROM PAGE 12
appeals court judge whose confirmation would expand the top US judicial body's conservative majority to 6-3, was poised to win the 22-member committee's approval with unified support among its 12 Republican members even with the Democrats vowing to stay away.

In announcing their boycott of yesterday's vote, Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer and Judiciary Committee Democrats said of Barrett's nomination: "This has been a sham process from the beginning."

They added that they "will not grant this process any further legitimacy by participating" in the committee's vote just 12 days before the US presidential election between Trump and Democrat Joe Biden in which tens of millions of ballots have already been cast.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার		
জেলা সুপারের কার্যালয়		
ফরিদপুর জেলা কারাগার		
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি		
পর নং-৫৮.০৪.২৯০০.১০৪.০৪.০০৯.২০-		তারিখঃ ০৬ কার্তিক ১৪২৭ বঙ্গাব্দ ২২ অক্টোবর ২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ
১	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর নাম	জেলা সুপার, ফরিদপুর জেলা কারাগার।
২	সংস্থ/কারাগারের নাম	ফরিদপুর জেলা কারাগার।
৩	দরপত্রের নাম	ফরিদপুর জেলা কারাগারের ০১/০১/২০২১ হতে ০১/১২/২০২১জি পর্যন্ত সময়ের বিভিন্ন প্রকার খাদ্যদ্রব্য সরবরাহের নির্দিষ্ট কারা ঠিকাদার/খাবারসারী/সরবরাহকারী নিয়োগের দরপত্র।
৪	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির বরাত ও তারিখ	ঢাকা বিভাগীয় দপ্তরের পর নং-৫৮.০৪.২৬০০.০৬১.০৪.০১১.২০২০-৮১৯(১৭) তারিখঃ ২০/১০/২০২০জি।
৫	ইচ্ছুক দরদাতাদের ন্যূনতম যোগ্যতা	দরপত্র সিডিউলে উল্লিখিত শর্তাবলী অনুযায়ী।
৬	বাংলাদেশ ও স্বাস্থ্য প্রতিষ্ঠানের উৎস	জাতীয় রাজস্ব তদ্বিধ।
৭	দরপত্র আহবান পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
৮	দরপত্র দাখিল প্রাপ্তির স্থান	১। কারা উপ-মহাপরিদর্শকের কার্যালয়, ঢাকা বিভাগ, ঢাকা। ২। জেলা সুপারের কার্যালয়, ফরিদপুর জেলা কারাগার।
৯	দরপত্র দাখিল বিরতের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৮/১১/২০২০জি বেলা ২:৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০	দরপত্র জমা দেয়ার স্থান	(ক) ফরিদপুর জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয় (খ) ফরিদপুর কোর্টমালী থানার কার্যালয় (গ) প্রধান ফটক, ফরিদপুর জেলা কারাগারে প্রাপ্ত দরপত্র বাজে।
১১	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	০৯/১১/২০২০জি বেলা ৯:০০ ঘটিকা হতে ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১২	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	ফরিদপুর জেলা কারাগারের প্রশাসনিক ভবনে ০৯/১১/২০২০জি তারিখ বেলা ১২:৩০ ঘটিকার সময়।
১৩	দরপত্র মূল্যায়ন কমিটির সভা	০৯/১১/২০২০জি বেলা ২:০০ ঘটিকা।
১৪	দরপত্র দাখিলের মূল্য	খাদ্যদ্রব্য সরবরাহের দরপত্রের সিডিউলের মূল্য= ৭৫০/- (সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা।
১৫	জামানতের পরিমাণ	১। খাদ্যদ্রব্য দরপত্রের জামানত প্রপ-ক) = ৪৫,০০০/-, (খ) = ৪০,০০০/- এবং (গ) = ৪৫,০০০/-, (ঘ) = ৩০,০০০/- এবং (ঙ) = ৪০,০০০/- টাকা।
১৬	কার্যাবসেধের সমসীয়া	০১/০১/২০২১জি হতে ০১/১২/২০২১জি পর্যন্ত।
১৭	দরপত্রের সাথে যে সকল কাগজপত্রাদি সংযুক্ত করতে হবে	দরপত্র সিডিউলের উল্লিখিত শর্তানুযায়ী।
১৮	দরদাতাদের প্রতি বিশেষ নির্দেশনাবলী	দরপত্র সিডিউলের শর্তাবলী পাঠান্তে যথাযথভাবে অবহিত হয়ে দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।
১৯	দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য তথ্যাবলী জানার জন্য সশ্রুতি করা কর্তৃপক্ষের দপ্তরে যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।	
২০	কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন/সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাঞ্ছিত করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন।	
আল মামুন		
জেলা সুপার		
ফরিদপুর জেলা কারাগার		
জিডি-১৬৮৫		

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	
Office of the Executive Engineer	
PWD City Division, Dhaka	
www.pwd.gov.bd	
Open Sculpture Model Design Competition	
Memo No. 25.36.2600.130.17.000.20.688	Date: 22.10.2020
Ministry of Liberation War Affairs in association with Public Works Department has undertaken the project "Construction of Swadhinata Stambha at Suhrawardy Udyan, Dhaka (3rd Phase)" to celebrate Golden Jubilee of the independence of Bangladesh. The 7th March Speech of Bangabandhu (Founder and Father of the Nation) and Surrender of Pakistani Army on 16th December will be represented in the form of sculpture to mark the emergence of Bangladesh as a free and prosperous nation within this monumental project. Both the sculptures competition will be national anonymous architectural design competition that will be organized by Ministry of Liberation War Affairs with the able support of Public Works Department.	
Brief	Double-base whole body sculpture of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to represent his 7th March Speech of 1971
	&
	Sculpture replicating Surrender ceremony of Pakistan Army at the Ramna Race Course Ground in Dhaka (the capital of Bangladesh) on 16th December 1971
Site	Allocated plot at Suhrawardy Udyan, Dhaka
Prizes	First Prize Tk. 5,00,000.00 (Taka Five lac) and Certificate Second Prize Tk. 3,00,000.00 (Taka Three lac) and Certificate Third Prize Tk. 2,00,000.00 (Taka Two lac) and Certificate
Jurors	1. Tapan Kanti Ghosh, Secretary, Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, Chairperson 2. Md. Ashraful Alam, Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, Member 3. A.S.M. Aminur Rahman, Chief Architect, Department of Architecture, Member 4. Hamiduzzaman Khan, Professor, Department of Sculpture, University of Dhaka, Member 5. Nisar Hossain, Dean (Acting), Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka, Member
Eligibility	The Sculptor (Team Leader) must be a citizen of Bangladesh
Registration	1. Eligible Sculptor/Group of Sculptor will have to pay an amount of BDT 5000/= in cash at PWD City Division Office from 01.11.2020 – 05.11.2020 between 10:00am to 5:00pm. 2. Upon receiving the amount PWD will issue a unique registration code against the participants. 3. The Design Brief will be available both in the websites of MOLWA and PWD.
Queries	Queries will only be addressed in writing form and to the following email: ee_city@pwd.gov.bd with 'Q-unique registration code' as subject.
Timeline	Registration 08.11.2020 – 12.11.2020 Receiving queries 15.11.2020 – 16.11.2020 Reply to queries 19.11.2020 Submission 03.12.2020, Sunday, 09.00am to 01.00pm at PWD Suhrawardy Udyan site office, Dhaka.
Venue	Suhrawardy Udyan, Dhaka
Contact	Mohammad Showkat Ullah Executive Engineer PWD City Division, Public Works Department, Segunbagicha, Dhaka Mobile: + 8801882-115074 ee_city@pwd.gov.bd
This advertisement also available at www.molwa.gov.bd and www.pwd.gov.bd	
Mohammad Showkat Ullah Executive Engineer PWD City Division, Dhaka	
GD-1690	

‘Don’t judge them on 10 days of cricket’



I can't compliment the players enough for the work they have done in the last six or seven weeks. Look at the shape of Taskin (Ahmed) and how Rubel (Hossain) is going, and Khaled (Ahmed) who came back from a big injury; the guys have really worked hard on their fitness levels. The biggest thing Taskin has done is change his work ethic. He is working so much harder. He is now in very good physical condition.

RUSSELL DOMINGO
BANGLADESH HEAD COACH

SPORTS REPORTER



Although the final of the BCB President's Cup, originally scheduled for today, was rescheduled to Sunday taking into consideration the weather forecast over the next 72 hours, there remains a positive vibe from players and management regarding the 50-over tournament.

The three-team tournament, organised by the BCB in an attempt to get the local players back into cricket, has been more than just a way of playing for most players after a long seven-month break. Even Mahmudullah Riyad, skipper of Mahmudullah XI, pointed out that players trying to outperform each other in the intra-squad tournament was a positive takeaway.

"Although it is a practice tournament, I think that all the players played with utmost seriousness and competitiveness. There was this competitiveness in every player; we tried to outperform each other and in that sense this was a really good tournament for us," Mahmudullah said yesterday.

The level has not been equal to that of an international competition -- justifiable given the BCB President's Cup is just an intra-squad tournament. But the



competitiveness among players and seriousness demonstrated by them throughout has not gone unnoticed by Bangladesh head coach Russell Domingo.

"The tournament has been played with fantastic intensity. I am very happy with how hard the guys have been trying on the field; the way the bowlers have bowled. It sure would have been nice to have got some more runs but I think everyone must understand that the players have not played any competitive cricket for nearly seven months," Domingo said during a virtual press conference yesterday.

Domingo also jumped in to

defend his players when questions were raised about frequent top-order failure -- a common trait in the ongoing BCB President's Cup.

"I think that's a bit of an unfair question. You have to remember that the guys have not played cricket for seven months. There is no doubt that they will get better and will start playing as a unit. The most important thing for me is that they are getting some game time. Their performances are not that important as far as I am concerned. I'd like the media to show some support and not harshly judge them on performances based on 10 days of cricket as they

have not been playing cricket for seven months on such tough-ish wickets," said Domingo.

Domingo was also more than happy to take into account positives such as the impressive performances of the fast bowlers.

"That's a positive question. Well done," chuckled Domingo after being asked to have his say about the fast bowlers' dominance in the tournament. "We have been trying to find some good, young fast bowlers for the last seven or eight months. Now we are developing good fast bowlers and I think they will be competitive on the international stage."

Najmul Hossain Shanto, skipper of Najmul XI, hoped for another positive performance from his side in the final. "There have been a lot of positives in the tournament. There were some good innings from Mushfiqur [Rahim] bhai, from Afif Hossain and also from the likes of Towhid Hridoy and Irfan Shukkur. In the bowling department, the likes of Taskin [Ahmed] bhai, Al-Amin [Hossain] bhai and Nayeem [Hasan] have put in some good performances which ultimately created healthy competition among us. I hope that we can also play the final with a positive mental set-up."

Focus to be on foreigners in coming transfer window

SPORTS REPORTER



With the transfer window for the 2020-21 season set to open on November 1 for six weeks, top Bangladesh Premier League clubs are looking to bring major changes in their roster of foreign players as they have to rely on similar sets of local players in the new season set to start from December 19.

In line with the new decisions of the professional football league committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation taken on October 15, local players have to play for the same clubs they represented last season, which was cancelled midway due to the coronavirus pandemic. The clubs were however given an opportunity to release local players, if they wanted to, on the condition that the players would return if they did not find new clubs. There are no such provisions for foreign players.

Most top clubs are not thinking of releasing their old guns; instead their focus will be on signing quality foreign players to strengthen squads because foreign players usually make the difference, be it in winning the title or avoiding relegation.

Except Saif SC, most top clubs also want to bank on their old coaches for the upcoming season.

Defending champions Bashundhara Kings have brought in three new foreign players -- Brazilian winger Robson Azevedo Da Silva Robinho, midfielder Jonathan da Silveria Fernandes and Iranian Khaled Shafiei -- and are looking for a replacement for Argentine striker Harman Barcos, who scored four times in his only appearance for the club in an AFC Cup match.

Although there were rumours that the national player-studded Kings may release some players, BA Jubair Nipu, head of Kings' strategy and planning, denied it.

"The management has decided not to release any players but if any players want to leave Bashundhara Kings, they can approach the management, which will take the final decision," said Nipu.

Echoing Nipu's sentiment, Satyajit Das Rupu, manager of six-time champions Abahani, said "We don't have any plan to release any players or rope in anyone but if any player feels he can't play for Abahani,

then he can approach us and we will think about it."

Rupu also said they are going to replace Kyrgyz player Edgar Bernhardt and are thinking of bringing another change in four-player quota.

"We want to release three to four junior players who did not improve as expected last season," Saif SC Managing Director Nasir Chowdhury said. "We are also thinking of signing four new foreign players."

Sheikh Russel KC are also thinking of releasing a couple of local players and bringing in all four new foreign players.

"After releasing a couple of players, we want to replace them if we can. We are communicating with foreign players as we have decided not to retain the services of



our old foreign players," said Sheikh Russel KC Sports Director Saleh Jaman Selim.

Sheikh Jamal DC Manager Anwarul Karim Helalsaid they would not release or sign local players but wanted to make changes to the foreigners' roster and retain only Solomon King.

Chattogram Abahani Manager Arman Aziz said that they were planning to release some local players and retain their foreign recruits.

Saif SC are looking to replace Serbian coach Drago Mamic while Bashundhara, Abahani, Sheikh Jamal, Sheikh Russel and Chattogram Abahani are all set to rely on last season's coaches.



Shakhtar Donetsk players celebrate after pulling off a shock 3-2 win away to 13-time winners Real Madrid in their Champions League Group B opener on Wednesday, despite the Ukrainian side missing 10 players due to injuries and Covid-19 while Real manager Zinedine Zidane looks dejected. (Bottom) Bayern Munich's Kingsley Coman celebrates his first goal against Atletico Madrid.

PHOTO: AFP/TWITTER

A night to remember for Shakhtar

AGENCIES



Bayern Munich's Champions League final hero Kingsley Coman was in inspired form again as the defending champions crushed Atletico Madrid. It was another ruthless display of attacking and a statement of intent by Bayern in a 4-0 victory on Wednesday.

There was a sense of deja-vu about Joshua Kimmich's killer pass and Coman's clinical finish. Just as they combined in Lisbon to clinch Europe's top prize in August, they did the same to open Bayern's title defense. That set the tone for another relentless performance by this phenomenal team.

Liverpool and Manchester City also won on the night, but it was Shakhtar Donetsk that produced one of the most memorable upsets in Champions League history,



beating 13-time winner Real Madrid 3-2 at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Real Madrid faced a team who had been decimated by injuries and had 10 players absent due to contracting Covid-19 and were still, quite simply, embarrassed.

"We were lacking a bit of everything today but worst of all we were lacking confidence. It's difficult to think of what to say

when you concede three goals in the first half. I'm left with a very bad feeling because of everything that happened tonight," said Real manager Zinedine Zidane.

"It's a bad game, a bad night but I'm the coach and I'm the one who has to find solutions. I didn't find them tonight and it's a very difficult moment for the players."

Dealing with a situation he had described as a "nightmare", Shakhtar's Portuguese coach Luis Castro watched on in admiration as his players out-witted and out-ran their illustrious opponents.

"I think they underestimated us but we showed our football and style," said Viktor Kornienko.

The Ukrainian champions, Luis Castro, added: "We were a united team from the first until the last minute. When the score was 3-2 we had to defend more and I thought 'Oh, let this game end as soon as possible'. It's a great result for us."

Real began their domestic campaign in impressive form, winning three and drawing one and looked to have picked up where they left off last season.

However, at the weekend the team looked lackluster against Cadiz, playing in their first top-flight Spanish campaign for 15 years, and were convincingly outplayed. Many wondered whether it was just a small blip or an insight into some early issues Zidane would be facing this season.

Wednesday's match would certainly have done nothing to allay those concerns. Missing Sergio Ramos through injury, and having rested Karim Benzema and Toni Kroos, Real Madrid's game plan was undetectable.

There were signs of a high press early on, but no indication of what to do with the ball when they won it. It was the same in the loss to Cadiz on Saturday.



While Lionel Messi trained with Barcelona yesterday, Cristiano Ronaldo enjoyed a meal in self-isolation. The Portuguese reportedly tested positive for the virus again yesterday. He is scheduled to undergo a swab today as well. If he is cleared, he may feature in Juventus' Serie A match against Verona on Sunday.

PHOTO: TWITTER



CR7 may still feature in Barca clash

AGENCIES, *Turin*

Juventus forward Cristiano Ronaldo could still face Barcelona in the Champions League next week despite reportedly returning another positive test for coronavirus yesterday. Ronaldo initially tested positive on October 13.

Juventus sent medical documents to UEFA a week before the game as per regulations yesterday, informing them of his condition, but the club are hopeful Ronaldo will test negative 24 hours before the match against Barcelona and that would be enough for him to participate.

QUIZ CONTEST

The Daily Star | STAR Cineplex

10 WINNERS EVERYDAY! 2 PREMIUM TICKETS FOR EACH WINNER

Email your answer to starquiz@outlook.com by 4.00 pm today with your name, DOB, mobile number and address. The winners of the quiz will be announced tomorrow in this newspaper and through email.

Winners are requested to follow the instructions given in email

QUIZ - 01

"How many branches of Star Cineplex in Bangladesh?"



Misery mounts for Italy returnees

They have to pay hefty sum for tickets of Biman's special flight to Rome

JAMIL MAHMUD

Expatriate workers flying to Italy on a special Biman flight will have to pay about Tk 77,000 for a ticket, over twice the amount they used to pay before the pandemic.

The workers have already been struggling after months of being unemployed and stuck at home.

The special flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines will carry a maximum of 260 passengers due to coronavirus restrictions imposed by the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh.

The national flag carrier will operate the flight on Wednesday directly from Dhaka to Rome, Biman officials said.

Some of those who came home on vacation before the pandemic on Turkish Airlines flights said they paid between Tk 50,000 and Tk 75,000 for the round trip.

Although the additional money will be a burden for them, they have no choice because further delay might cost them their jobs in the European country, the expatriates said.

Mosharrarf Hossain, an expatriate who works in Palermo, said he bought round trip tickets from Turkish Airlines at Tk 75,000 when he came home on February 3.

Talking to The Daily Star at Biman's Motijheel office yesterday, he said his original return date was March 14. But Turkish Airlines now wants to re-issue the return ticket for November 13.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



A man uses the hand-washing facilities at the Khamarbari Puja Mandap, installed as precautionary measures against the spread of the coronavirus. Durga Puja celebrations began yesterday, but due to torrential rain throughout the afternoon and fear of the Covid-19 pandemic, the turnout was much thinner compared to other years.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHANGMA

COVID VACCINE

Nepali firm likely to buy 2m shots of BANCOVID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nepalese drugmaker Anmol Healthcare Ltd might buy two million shots of BANCOVID, the vaccine candidate being developed by Bangladesh's Globe Biotech Ltd, officials said.

The Nepalese company has sent a "letter of intent" to Globe on Wednesday, said a spokesperson of the company.

Nepalese Ambassador to Bangladesh Dr Banshidhar Mishra visited a laboratory of the company in the capital yesterday.

The Nepal government is also interested in procuring the potential vaccine once the clinical trials are complete, the ambassador said at the facility.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

POTATO PRICE HIKE

Wholesalers allege pressure from hoarders

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Wholesalers have expressed concerns that the price of potatoes may not come down anytime soon as they are under pressure from a section of hoarders, who recently bought potato stocks at cold storages, to sell the vegetable at a price higher than the government-fixed wholesale rate of Tk 30 a kg.

They also alleged that the hoarders were threatening to stop the supply if they did not follow their directives.

The price of potatoes started rising from the middle of last month. Last week, consumers had to buy the tuber for up to Tk 50 a kg.

According to wholesalers, ownership of potato stocks at cold storages changes up to four times a year. This year, the ownership changed more frequently as a

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangladesh will attend Colombo Plan meeting

October 23, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGLADESH WILL ATTEND AS OBSERVER

Bangladesh will attend the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee meeting in New Delhi on October 30 as an observer. This decision to seat the newborn nation as an observer is taken by the Colombo Plan Secretariat after an overwhelming number of the 24 member nations extended their consent to the proposal. Bangladesh is already a member of the Commonwealth, a permanent invitee as an observer at the United Nations and an observer to such world bodies as the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

WALDHEIM MAY SEND EMISSARY TO PAKISTAN

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



24 more die, 1,696 infected in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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

With this, the total number of deaths rose to 5,747, which is 1.46 percent of all confirmed cases.

During the same period, another 1,696 people had tested positive for the viral

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

Son 'kills mother over property'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A 55-year-old woman was killed allegedly by her son and six others in Noakhali's Subornachar upazila.

Police said Humayun Kabir Huma, 28, the victim's son, and six others strangled Noor Jahan to death and then cut her body into pieces and threw them onto a paddy field of one Amir Hossain, who had lent money to Huma's step-brother Belal, to frame him in the murder.

Noor Jahan was married to another person who fathered Belal, locals said.

Belal took Tk 4 lakh as loans from local NGOs and Amir Hossain for rearing cattle and farming fish, and Noor Jahan was the guarantor of the money, police added.

As Belal died around one and a half years ago, the lenders put pressure on Noor Jahan and Huma to repay the money.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Three girls raped by neighbours

Retired cop held for raping woman

STAR REPORT

Three teenage girls were raped by their neighbours in Savar, Narayanganj and Mymensingh on Wednesday and a 65-year-old retired sergeant was arrested for raping a woman for the last nine months in Noakhali.

Meanwhile, Jubo League leader Mujibur Rahman Sharif, who is accused of

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

'This isn't a reality show'

Obama slams 'racist', 'divisive', 'incapable' Trump ahead of final presidential debate

AGENCIES

Former US president Barack Obama excoriated Donald Trump and warned against complacency despite favorable opinion polls during his first public rally in support of Democratic challenger Joe Biden on Wednesday ahead of the November 3 election.

Campaigning for Democratic White House nominee Joe Biden in Pennsylvania, Obama likened Trump to a "crazy uncle" and said he emboldened racists.

In North Carolina, the Republican president mocked Obama for being wrong

about the 2016 election outcome.

More than 42 million Americans have already voted, according to the US Elections Project of the University of Florida, nearly 30 percent of the total turnout in 2016.

Biden and Trump are scheduled to meet in their second and final debate later in the night in Nashville, Tennessee, giving the Republican an opportunity to change the trajectory of a race that Biden is leading in national opinion polls.

But the margin is slimmer in the handful of US states that could go either way and ultimately decide the outcome on 3

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Senate body okays SC pick by Trump

REUTERS, Washington

The Republican-led US Senate Judiciary Committee yesterday approved President Donald Trump's nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to a lifetime US Supreme Court seat despite a Democratic boycott of the meeting, clearing the way for a full Senate debate and vote on confirmation.

By a vote of 12-0, the panel approved Barrett with all Republican members voting yes and the 10 committee Democrats boycotting the meeting. Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham said the Democratic boycott was "their choice, adding, "We're not going to allow them to take over the committee."

"This is a groundbreaking moment" for conservatives, Graham said before the vote began. Barrett, a federal

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6





প্রগতি লাইফ ইন্স্যুরেন্স লিমিটেড

প্রধান কার্যালয়ঃ প্রগতি ইন্স্যুরেন্স ভবন (৬ষ্ঠ তলা), ২০-২১ কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৫
পিএবিএক্স: ৮১৮৯১৮৮-৮, ফ্যাক্স: ৮৮-০২-৯১২৪০২৪
ই-মেইল: info@pragatilife.com, ওয়েবসাইট: www.pragatilife.com

জমি ক্রয় সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি

প্রগতি লাইফ ইন্স্যুরেন্স লিমিটেড নিম্ন তফসিল বর্ণিত প্লটটি ক্রয়ের জন্য চুক্তিবদ্ধ হয়েছে। জমির তফসিল : প্লট নং-১৩, সড়ক নং-১৮, গুলশান দক্ষিণ বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২১২। RAJUK কর্তৃক বরাদ্দসূত্রে মালিক জনাব মনজুর মোরশেদ খান। উক্ত জমির ব্যাপারে কারও কোন আপত্তি থাকলে আগামী ২৭ অক্টোবর, ২০২০ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্ন ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।


প্রধান, প্রশাসন বিভাগ
প্রগতি লাইফ ইন্স্যুরেন্স লিমিটেড
২০-২১, কাওরান বাজার
ঢাকা-১২১৫।




PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 23

Fajr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:50	12:30	4:00	5:36	7:15
JAMAAT 5:25	1:15	4:15	5:39	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Debt Management Department Bangladesh Bank Head Office Dhaka



"Invest in Government Bond,
Participate in our country's development"

Opportunities to Invest in Risk-Free Government Treasury Bills and Bonds !

By investing in the 100% risk-free Treasury Bills and Bonds through the banks and financial institutions regulated by Bangladesh Bank, along with earning profits, you can take part in our economic development. The features of treasury bills and bonds and the investment process are the following:

- Tradable Government Treasury Bills and Bonds:** At present, 14, 91, 182 and 364-day Treasury Bills (T-Bills) and 2, 5, 10, 15 and 20-year Treasury Bonds (T-Bonds) are available.
- Who can invest:** Resident Bangladeshi individuals and institutions (e.g. banks, financial institutions, insurance companies, mutual funds, provident funds, pension funds, etc.) can purchase T-Bills and Bonds. Non-resident individuals and institutions are also eligible to purchase T-Bonds.
- Investable Amount:** In the face value of a minimum of taka 1.00 lac or any multiple amounts of 1.00 lac.
- Profit/Coupon Facilities:** The investors would generally receive coupons semiannually on T-Bonds. Coupons are fixed throughout the lifetime of each T-Bond, which is displayed on the website of Bangladesh Bank (<https://www.bb.org.bd/monetaryactivity/tbillnbond/tbillnbondindex.php>). In contrast, T-Bills are zero-coupon bonds as one can buy at a discount (less than the face value) and receive the face value at maturity.
- Opportunities to Buy and Sell Freely:** By opening a 'securities account' in the system maintained by Bangladesh Bank through the treasury division of a bank/financial institution (FI), investors can purchase T-Bills/T-Bonds from the primary or secondary market. Afterward, T-Bills/T-Bonds can be freely sold to other investors in the secondary market at any time before maturity.
- Tax Rebate Facilities:** Similar to savings certificates, at present, individual investors are enjoying tax rebate facilities against investments in T-Bonds.
- Investment Process for Non-Resident/Foreign Investors:** Non-residents/foreigners can purchase T-Bonds. Bonds purchased by a non-resident may freely be resold to any resident or non-resident investor. Furthermore, coupon payments and resale/redemption proceeds are freely repatriable abroad in foreign.

For further queries, please contact
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