



'CHILL DONALD, CHILL!'
Thunberg hits back at Trump over anger management taunt
SEE PAGE 5

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

www.thedailystar.net

Your Right to Know

RABIUL AWAL 20, 1442 HJIRI

12 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00

ELECTORAL VOTE (270 TO WIN)	POPULAR VOTE	USA PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2020	SENATE CONTROL (51)	HOUSE CONTROL (218)
253	73,984,885		48	208
213	69,880,568		47	196

On the verge of VICTORY

White House in reach for Biden as he takes lead in Pennsylvania, Georgia; Trump says he won't concede

AGENCIES

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden took the lead over President Donald Trump in the battleground states of Pennsylvania and Georgia for the first time yesterday, putting him on the verge of winning the White House.

Three days after polls closed, Biden has a 253 to 213 lead in the state-by-state electoral college vote that determines the winner, according to Edison Research. Winning Pennsylvania's 20 electoral votes would put the former vice president over the 270 he needs to secure the presidency.

Biden would also win the election if he prevails in two of the three other key states where he held narrow leads yesterday: Georgia, Arizona and Nevada. Like Pennsylvania, all three were still processing ballots yesterday.

In both Pennsylvania and Georgia, Biden overtook Trump on the strength of mail-in ballots that were cast in urban Democratic strongholds like Philadelphia and Atlanta.

As Biden inched closer to triumph, he



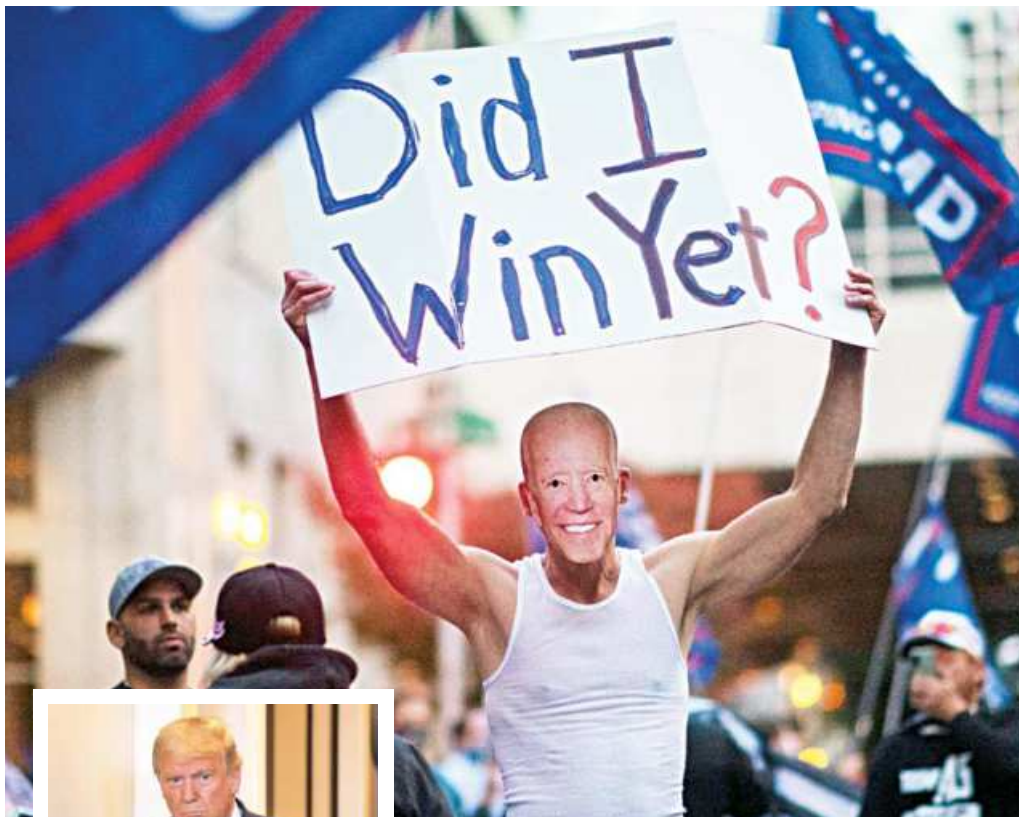
is expected to address the nation this morning (BST), according to a person familiar with his plans. The remarks could be a victory speech; a Biden aide said he could be declared the winner within hours.

With his re-election chances fading, Trump escalated his baseless attacks on the results, appearing at the White House early Friday (BST) to falsely claim the election was being "stolen" from him. His campaign is pursuing a series of lawsuits across battleground states that legal experts described as unlikely to succeed in altering the election outcome.

Even as vote totals now show him trailing Biden in key battleground states, Trump has not prepared a concession speech and in conversations with allies in recent days, he has said he has no intention of conceding the election, people familiar with the matter told CNN and Fox.

Trump's campaign made clear in a statement yesterday that it will contest the election.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



A Trump supporter carries a sign while wearing a mask of US Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden during a protest outside of the Philadelphia Convention Center, where votes are still being counted days after the presidential election. *Left*, President Donald Trump arrives at the White House press briefing room where he spoke of polls fraud without providing any evidence.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Trump loses legal fight in battlegrounds

Vows Nevada lawsuit

AGENCIES

President Donald Trump's campaign has lost court rulings in the closely contested states of Georgia and Michigan and Pennsylvania, even as it vowed to bring a new lawsuit challenging what it called voting irregularities in Nevada.

In the Georgia case, the campaign alleged

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

PENNSYLVANIA (20 electoral votes)
BIDEN leads by 13,662 votes
96% ballots tabulated

GEORGIA (16 electoral votes)
BIDEN leads by 1,553 votes
99% votes counted

NORTH CAROLINA (15 electoral votes)
TRUMP leads by 76,737 votes
95% votes counted

ARIZONA (11 electoral votes)
BIDEN leads by 40,942 votes
93% votes counted

NEVADA (6 electoral votes)
BIDEN leads by 20,137 votes
92% ballots tabulated

SOURCE: CNN

Shakib causes delight and concern

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan's return from the US early yesterday was a cause for celebration, but it also caused a coronavirus-related controversy.

The prime minister and health authorities have asked people returning to the country to be in quarantine for 14 days as the country braces for a second wave. Shakib, however, went out in public to be at the launching ceremony of a super shop within 12 hours of his arrival.

There were pictures of the all-rounder -- whose one-year ICC ban ended on October 29 -- and those surrounding him without masks.

The BCB said Shakib came with a Covid-19 negative certificate, but health experts said it still poses a risk as the returnee could be infected in-flight.

MORE ON PAGE 11



REINTEGRATION OF RETURNEES

Little response to loan scheme

Migrant workers now stuck home find some terms and conditions difficult to fulfil

JAMIL MAHMUD

Shahidul Islam of Cumilla returned home on September 10 from Saudi Arabia after losing a restaurant job there.

Worried about his future, the 37-year-old was thinking of doing something to earn a decent living in the country as he saw no prospect of going back to the Gulf nation anytime soon.

Then a few weeks ago, he came to know about the "special reintegration loan" for the migrant workers. He then visited Probashi Kallyan Bank's branch office in Cumilla for the loan, only to get frustrated.

The bank officials told him that he could get a Tk 5 lakh loan only if he agrees to launch a trade. For this, he must have to submit papers of a property where he will run the business.

"I don't own such a property. I don't have enough capital to rent a store at this moment either," Shahidul said.

As he enquired about Tk 2 lakh loan for a dairy farm, the bank officials said he could get the loan for maximum one year.

"It means I have to repay about Tk 20,000 a month in instalment, which is impossible considering my present financial condition," he told The Daily Star by phone.

Shahidul is among the several hundred migrant workers who find some terms and conditions for getting the loan tough to fulfil. As a result,

About 2.25 lakh migrant workers, including 25,436 women, returned between April 1 and October 24. Most of them came home either after losing jobs or there was no prospect of a job in the host countries.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

1,469 more test Covid positive

15 new deaths in 24 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

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

With this, the total number of deaths rose to 6,036 which is 1.45 percent of all confirmed cases in the country.

Besides, a total of 1,469 new infections were recorded in those 24 hours which took the toll of total infected people to 417,475, added the release.

With this, Bangladesh has ranked four fold down -- from 18th last week to 22nd yesterday -- in the list of worst affected countries in the world in terms of the total number of confirmed cases.

The position is one step behind Indonesia and one step ahead of Czechia, according to worldometer.info.

Against a total of 13,521

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Vaccines must be free of cost for all

Says Hasina, urges global leaders to formulate well-coordinated roadmap to face Covid crisis

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged world leaders to formulate a well-coordinated roadmap to face the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has created a multifaceted global problem and it should be addressed globally. We need a well-coordinated roadmap to face this crisis," she said while opening the 14th ASEM Finance Ministers' Meeting.

The PM expressed optimism that the world is going to get effective vaccines against Covid-19 soon. She called for making the vaccines available free of cost for all countries.

"We are hoping that the world is going to get effective vaccines soon. They must be made available for all countries, especially the LDCs and developing ones, free of cost. The rich countries, multilateral development banks and international financial institutions should come forward with generous support in this regard."

Hasina inaugurated the event, hosted by Bangladesh virtually, by delivering a pre-recorded video message, reports UNB.

The theme of the meeting is "Addressing Covid-19: Ensuring a Strong, Sustainable, Inclusive and Balanced Recovery".

The premier urged the rich countries, multilateral development banks (MDB) and international financial institutions (IFIs) to come forward.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



53 UZI PISTOLS

Detectives looking for users' info

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Detectives are now gathering details of those who own Uzi pistols; military-grade semi-automatic weapons imported in the absence of monitoring by the authorities.

Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has already got the list of the licensed arms holders, who purchased 53 of the weapons from six authorised arms dealers in the country. The dealers imported 111 Uzis in the last five years.

Both dealers and arms holders declared the weapons "rifles" on papers as the import of semi-automatic or automatic weapons for personal use is prohibited in the country, said detectives, adding that each Uzi was sold for Tk 4 lakh to Tk 4.5 lakh.

The "Uzi pistol" looks more like a submachine gun than a rifle or a pistol. The magazine of the Uzi

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

11th Death Anniversary of Mir Zahir Hossain

Today marks the Death Anniversary of **Mir Zahir Hossain** (1947-2009) former Managing Director of Mir Akhter Hossain Ltd., Mir Cement Ltd., Mir Concrete Products Ltd., Mir Real Estate Ltd. & Mir Telecom Ltd. He was also the former Chairman and one of the founders of NCC Bank Ltd., former president of Bangladesh Association of Construction Industry (BACI) and General Secretary of International Federation of Asian and Western Pacific Contractor's Associations (IFAWPCA).

His hard work, vision, work ethics, perseverance and philanthropic sense has set the path of establishment for Mir Group of Companies. May we all strive to achieve the standard of success that he was able to.

On this occasion we mourn this loss and we remember him at his element: an enthusiastic perfectionist in business and general people welfare. May the Almighty Allah bless him with eternal peace and a place in heaven.

On behalf of Family and Mir Group of Companies

Shama-e Zaheer
Chairman
Mir Group of Companies



Potato prices go beyond control

Many traders stop selling, complains of shortage of supply from wholesalers; govt-fixed rate only on paper

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Many stores in the capital have stopped selling potatoes over the last few days after the authorities fixed the prices and began to penalise overcharging sellers.

The cynical manipulation of the market has resulted in runaway prices of potatoes in the market.

In the weeks following monsoon every year, vegetables become costlier, forcing people to add more potatoes to their diet, said Afzal Hossain, a resident of Moghbazar.

"But this year, potato prices are also rising," he said.

Lutfun Nahar, a house staff member, came to the kitchen market in Karwan Bazar yesterday to buy potatoes at a cheaper rate. But the effort went in vain.



"In my area, potatoes are being sold at Tk 50. But each kg is sold for Tk 48 here. I don't know how we will be able to live amid such high prices of food," she said, adding that the income of her husband, a rickshaw puller, has dipped,

making matters worse.

Wholesalers at kitchen markets in Mirpur-1 and Mohammadpur say they have stopped selling potatoes from October 31.

In Karwan Bazar, Jatrabari and Shyambazar, potatoes are being sold at a handful of stores.

At Kalyanpur Notun Bazar, Mohakhali, Mirpur and Tejgaon on Tuesday, the correspondent found many stores selling different vegetables except potatoes.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

স্মরণ



এনসিসি ব্যাংক লিঃ এর
উদ্যোক্তা পরিচালক ও সাবেক চেয়ারম্যান
মীর জাহির হোসেন-এর
৯৯তম মৃত্যুবর্ষিকী আজ।

আমরা তাঁকে গভীর শ্রদ্ধা স্মরণ করছি এবং
তার বিদেহী আত্মার মাগফেরাত কামনা করছি।

পরিচালনা পর্ষদ এবং ব্যবস্থাপনা কর্তৃপক্ষ

এনসিসি ব্যাংক
গণপরিষদ সদস্য

BANGLADESH
UPDATE



1,469
New cases in 24hrs



4,17,475
Total cases



6,036
Deaths



3,35,027
Recoveries

GLOBAL
UPDATE



1,242,865
Deaths



49,261,522
Total cases

If elected, Biden likely to focus on human rights

Experts believe he will give priority to Rohingya issue, strengthening democracy across the globe

PORIMOL PALMA

Potential US President Joe Biden's foreign policy will emphasise on strengthening democracy and human rights globally -- a shift from that of incumbent President Donald Trump who focused on trade, said international relations analysts at Washington, DC.

As part of that, Biden will also put pressure on Myanmar, which has a bad human rights record, especially in its treatment of Rohingyas and some other ethnic groups, they said.

"Obviously, the Biden administration will have more focus on the Rohingya issue than that of Trump. It's been a terrible issue and a tragic thing for long," said Michael Kugleman, deputy director and senior associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, DC.

Zack Cooper, research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC, echoed Kugleman's view while interacting with foreign journalists virtually at the 2020 US Presidential Election Reporting Seminar on Friday, organised by the Hawaii-based East-West Centre.

In response to a question by The Daily Star, he said the Trump administration made some important statements on the Rohingyas in 2017, but Biden will be much more vocal about it as he would emphasise on human rights and democracy issues globally as part of his foreign policy.

So far, the international community has provided some humanitarian support to nearly a million Rohingya refugees, who fled military crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhine State in 2017, but not for a sustainable repatriation to their homeland where they are denied citizenship and basic human rights.

Asked how the US-Bangladesh relationship would look like under the

Biden administration, Kugleman said Bangladesh so far has not generated as much attention in the US policy considerations as that of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Policymakers of both Republican and Democratic parties are quite concerned about a terrorist attack that took place in Bangladesh a few years back, and also the crackdown on freedom of speech and political opposition.

He thinks Biden will be working with Bangladesh on human rights, governance and democracy issues as well as strengthen economic relations.

US Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun during his recent visit to Dhaka termed Bangladesh a key country under its Indo-Pacific Strategy that aims at a free and open Indo-Pacific and improving relations with allies in Asia, where China's influence is growing.

Kugleman said the Biden administration will work very closely with India, Bangladesh and other South Asian countries to promote trade, human rights, democracy and good governance.

The analysts said the US Asia policy under Biden would mostly be looked at from the China angle. Biden may not be confrontational with China like Trump, but rivalry with China is going to persist for some time.

Xi Jinping and his Chinese Communist Party are not at all popular in the US, they said, adding that while China has tremendous economic influence globally, there are questions over governance, transparency, and environmental issues in the investments that it makes overseas.

Zack Cooper said Biden is likely to have a positive approach with China, instead of a confrontational one. He has a shared vision, not just a negative China vision and will work on relations in ways that he can.

Potato prices

FROM PAGE 1

Hasan, owner of Hasan Store at Kalyanpur Notun Bazar, told the correspondent on Tuesday night that he had not been selling potatoes since Sunday because there was no supply at the wholesale market in Mirpur-1. Sourcing goods from any other market would raise the transportation cost, he said.

"After adding the transportation and other costs, the price would be between Tk 55 and Tk 60 a kg. That's why I stopped selling potatoes," he said.

The crisis began in mid-September and has been getting worse. The Department of Agriculture Marketing (DAM) on October 7 fixed the price of each kg of retail potato at Tk 30 and wholesale at Tk 25. For stockpilers who keep potatoes in cold storage facilities the price was fixed at Tk 23 a kg.

But the price rose to Tk 50 and beyond at retail markets.

The DAM on October 27 fixed the retail prices at Tk 35 a kg following a meeting with cold storage association members and businessmen. The wholesale price was fixed at Tk 30 per kg.

According to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), the retail price of potato was Tk 42-45 yesterday. It was

only Tk 23-25 around this time last year.

There are over 100 wholesale shops at the kitchen market in Mirpur-1.

Salesperson Solaiman said he heard the authorities warn storekeepers of six months in jail and Tk 1 lakh in fines for selling potatoes at higher rates.

Some wholesalers in Karwan Bazar said they sell potatoes only at night in fear of being fined.

They suggested the government control the price at cold-storage level.

Some businessmen who hoarded a lot of potatoes last month have made the matter worse.

"But the hoarders stopped selling potatoes once the government fixed the price," said Muslem.

The Bangladesh Cold Storage Association (BCSA) in a letter last week urged the hoarders to sell the potatoes at prices fixed by the government.

According to BCSA, this year the production of potatoes was 85 lakh tonnes and due to transport and labour crises during the pandemic, only 40 lakh tonnes of potatoes were kept in cold storages.

Of the 40 lakh tonnes, 55 percent was sold out by October. Of the rest, 10 lakh tonne are meant for farmers.

County, told reporters that there was no evidence of improper ballots being processed.

Bob Bauer, a senior adviser to Biden's campaign, called the various Trump lawsuits a "meritless" distraction and said the strategy was designed to undermine the integrity of the electoral process.

"This is part of a broader misinformation campaign that involves some political theater," he said.

"They're intended to give the Trump campaign the opportunity to argue the vote count should stop. It is not going to stop," he told reporters on Thursday.

In Pennsylvania, where Trump lost his lead to Biden yesterday, the Trump campaign and other Republicans filed various legal challenges.

An appeals court in Pennsylvania on Thursday ordered that Trump campaign officials be allowed to more closely observe ballot processing in Philadelphia, which led to a brief delay in the count.

A judge later in the day helped negotiate an agreement that a fixed number of observers from each campaign -- up to 60 -- could be admitted into parts of the city's ballot-counting area inside the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

Pennsylvania Democrats filed papers on Thursday in the US Supreme Court saying that although they would not oppose the Trump campaign's bid to intervene in a pending appeal in which Republicans seek to block late-arriving mail-in ballots in the state, it was premature for the court to act on the motion.

Trump has repeatedly said that he expects the Supreme Court, which has a 6-3 conservative majority including three justices he appointed, to have a key role in determining the outcome.

"We think there's going to be a lot of litigation," Trump told reporters on Thursday, adding that "it's going to end up perhaps in the highest court in the land."

But it is unlikely the Supreme Court would have the final word in any decisive way and any challenge would have to make its way through the usual court process, legal experts say.



Workers repair iron sheets along a road in the capital's Dholaikhal, obstructing movement of traffic and pedestrians in the area. Used iron sheets and drums have been piled up, occupying almost half of a lane of the road. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Detectives looking for users' info

FROM PAGE 1

can hold 20 bullets, while service pistols, used by law enforcers, can hold 15, say detectives.

Concerned that the country's law and order could be under risk if such sophisticated weapons are available to people, detectives are now looking into every possible details, including social status, of those who bought them, they said.

The DB launched the investigation after they recovered an Uzi from the possession of a drug dealer -- Minal Sharif -- on August 20 in the capital.

The law enforcers learnt that it was bought against the licence for a rifle.

Confirming the development, Golam Mostofa Rashel, deputy commissioner of DB police (Teigaon Division), told The Daily Star yesterday that they were working after collecting the list of the arms holders.

"We are now sending letters to police stations concerned asking for addresses and other details of the buyers, including their social status," he said. "We are waiting for reports containing the information."

"We saw that such a powerful weapon reached the hands of a drug dealer. We want to know how it happened ... We want to make sure it never happens again," he added.

After getting all the information, detectives would submit a detailed reported to the home ministry, requesting it to take necessary steps.

Talking to this correspondent, a police source said the DMP headquarters had already sent another report to the ministry, detailing how "Uzi pistols" make their way into the country amid lax monitoring and with the use of false declarations.

In that report, the DMP recommended immediate forfeit of all imported "Uzi pistols" and their handover to law enforcers, saying if the firearms reach the hands of militants or any criminal group, it could be dangerous.

The irregularities in the arms import took place as there is no arms expert in customs and district commissioner offices. So, the presence of arms experts is necessary during the release of any arms shipment by the customs house, the police report suggested.

On October 29, The Daily Star ran a report on the issue under the headline "Military-Grade Firearms: Shady import worries cops". The report shed light on how a section of licensed arms dealers brought in the Uzis in the name of rifles.

After the report was published, three other licensed arms dealers -- MH Arms Co, Shafiqul Islam Arms & Co, and Ahmed Hossain Arms Co -- reacted to it, sending a "clarification" to this newspaper which did not mention their names in the news item.

They said the report read that "the Uzi pistol is a military-grade pistol and used by the Defence Force". They claimed it was not true and that the import of semi-automatic firearms was

not prohibited in Bangladesh.

They said the Defence Forces use Uzi full automatic sub-machine gun and use lethal 9mm bullets in them. Whereas, the imported Uzis were of civilian version and use .22 calibre bullets.

The arms dealers also said the arms-manufacturing company makes two models of "rifles" -- one is Uzi SMG with long butt and the other Uzi pistol with a smaller butt. The company uses the pistol tag for the identification of the rifle model.

The tag of a "pistol" does not make a weapon a pistol, they argued.

The Daily Star article was based on a report forwarded to the DMP headquarters by the DB.

In its report, the DB said, "The Uzi pistol is a military-grade weapon and it is largely used by the armed forces in Belgium and the Israeli Defence Force. The arms are used to provide security to VIPs." This newspaper has a copy of the report.

Experts also said the "Uzi pistol" could fire more shots than the service arms used by law enforcers in the country.

The police report also read that "the imported firearm is a pistol and the arms dealers are importing, preserving and selling it after giving false declaration that it is a rifle."

Besides, Clause Six of Arms Rules 2016 says any weapon which exceeds the standard of service weapons cannot be imported in the country for personal use.

Vaccines must be free of cost for all

FROM PAGE 1

Emphasising greater collaboration to conquer any hurdle on the path to prosperity during this difficult time, Hasina said collaboration, not isolation, can help overcome any crisis.

The advanced economies must fulfill their unmet promises concerning duty-free and quota-free market access, and technological support for developing countries, the PM added.

She called upon the G-7, G-20, OECD countries, MDBs and IFIs to play their vital role in bailing out the affected LDCs and developing nations. The PM said they would have to come forward with increased fiscal stimulus, concessional finance, and debt relief measures.

Hasina said the Covid-19 pandemic has had devastating impacts on the health systems and economies of all countries.

She said the least developed and

developing countries, in particular, are the worst-hit by the pandemic and a vast majority of the people are suffering from the loss of income and employment.

Talking about Bangladesh's efforts for advancing its economy, the premier said the country achieved sustained high growth in the last one decade and also attained tremendous progress in some socio-economic indicators.

She mentioned that her government also adopted "Vision 2041" aiming to elevate Bangladesh to an upper-middle-income country by 2031 and a developed one by 2041.

The PM said the country was well on track to achieve SDGs, but the pandemic made a serious dent in the advancements despite her government's all-out efforts to contain the spread of the virus. She said a large stimulus package was given to overcome

economic losses.

Hasina said after suffering an initial setback for a few months, Bangladesh's economy has started recovering.

Finance Minister AHM Mostafa Kamal delivered the welcome address, while vice presidents of World Bank and ADB, as well as the IMF's deputy director for the Asia-Pacific region, gave keynote speeches at the meeting.

Finance ministers, advisers on the ministry of finance and representatives concerned of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) member states, including Germany, Spain, Poland, Bulgaria, Thailand, Japan, China, Myanmar, Indonesia and Singapore, are taking part in the event.

'MITIGATE COVID-19 IMPACTS' Meanwhile, a Bangladesh foreign ministry press release yesterday said participants of the ASEM Finance Ministers' Meeting discussed and

First madrasa for transgender Muslims opens

AFP, Dhaka

Bangladesh opened its first Islamic school for transgender Muslims yesterday with clerics calling it a first step towards integrating the discriminated minority into society.

The madrasa is one of a series of recent moves in Bangladesh to make life easier for the Muslim-majority nation's up to 1.5 million transgender people.

The LGBT community faces widespread discrimination in the country, with a colonial-era law still in place that punishes gay sex by prison terms, though enforcement is rare.

But about 50 transgender students read Quranic verses to mark the opening of the Dawatul Islam Tritio Linger Madrasa, or Islamic Third Gender School, on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

"I am ecstatic," Shakila Akhter, a 33-year-old student, told AFP.

"We are grateful to the clerics for this beautiful move."

Akhter was born a girl and had always wanted to become a doctor or lawyer, but those ambitions were thwarted when she left home while still a child to join a transgender commune.

"We are Muslims, yet we can't go to a mosque," Akhter said.

A group of clerics led by Abdur Rahman Azad transformed the top floor of a three-storey building into the school with funding from a local charity.

Azad's team already offers Quranic lessons to seven transgender groups in Dhaka and said the madrasa grew out of the need for a permanent base for the community.

Up to 150 students -- nearly all adults -- will get lessons similar to those in a traditional madrasa, where the Quran is taught along with Islamic philosophy, Bengali, English, maths and social sciences.

Azad said transgender people, known as Hijras in Bangladesh, have suffered too much.

"For too long they have been living a miserable life. They can't go to schools, madrasas or mosques. They have been victims of discrimination. We, society and the state are to blame for this," he said.

"We want to end this discrimination. Allah does not discriminate between people. Islam treats everyone as a human being. Hijras should enjoy all rights like any other human being."

In 2015 Islamist extremists hacked to death a leading gay activist and editor of an LGBT magazine, while other prominent homosexuals have since fled the country.

But steps forward have been made for the community. Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government has since 2013 allowed trans to be identified as a separate gender.

Last year they were allowed to register to vote as a third gender, and their numbers will be counted in a census to be carried out next year across the country of 168 million.

exchanged views on relief and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the most effective way for the timely implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.

The Meeting noted that the pandemic brought unprecedented challenges and untold sufferings around the world. As a consequence, more than one million people lost their lives, the socio-economic situation, public health, environment and society have seriously taken a hit and the global economic outlook remains uncertain.

Given the gravity of the devastation and challenges posed by Covid-19 on the economic situation and outlook, the Meeting acknowledged that mitigating social and economic impacts, safeguarding lives, livelihoods and businesses, and finding an effective solution to the Covid-19 are the ASEM member state's urgent collective priority.

with anchors saying they needed to correct his statements.

Biden, who earlier in the day urged patience as votes were counted, responded on Twitter. "No one is going to take our democracy away from us. Not now, not ever."

Trump supporters, some carrying guns, ramped up their demonstrations against the process Friday morning (BST). In Arizona, Trump and Biden supporters briefly scuffled outside the Maricopa County Elections Department in Phoenix.

In Philadelphia, police said they arrested one man and seized a weapon as part of an investigation into a purported plot to attack the city's Pennsylvania Convention Center, where votes were being counted.

1,469 more

FROM PAGE 1

tests in the same 24 hours in 113 laboratories, the positivity rate was 10.86 percent while the overall positivity rate was at 17.26 percent.

Meanwhile, 1,439 new Covid-19 patients have recovered from their illnesses in those 24 hours.

The total number of recoveries rose to 335,027 which was more than 80 percent of all cases.

Among the 15 dead, 11 were males and four were females. All of them died in hospitals, according to the press release.

One aged between 21 and 30 years, four between 41 and 50, five between 51 and 60 and five others were above 60 years.

One each dead was from Mymensingh and Rangpur division, five from Chattogram and the rest eight were from Dhaka division, read the press release.

TANGENTS
BY IHTISHAM KABIR

Birds and Animals by Night

The first time I tried birding at night was several years ago in Rajshahi. My friend Niaz and I had spent a day cruising the Padma searching its *chars* for birds. In the evening we met with members of the Rajshahi Bird Club. They told us about a rare Indian Scops Owl that had been found in a nearby mango orchard. Would we like to see it? Yes, of course, we said. With bright torch lights, they spread out into the orchard. After an hour of searching the trees, someone found the owl. It was the first and only time I saw this memorable creature and we all photographed it.

Why look for birds and animals at night time? Many creatures are nocturnal. Their activity begins when the sun goes down. Birds such as Owls and Nightjars, and forest creatures such as the Slow Loris and various wild cats come out at night. To see them you must do the same.

However, until that fateful evening in Rajshahi I had been reluctant to engage in night birding. The reason is simple: photographing at night is terrible. There is never enough light, and the quality of the artificial light of the torches is dismal. But now, after several night outings, I am convinced that the thrill of seeing a new creature outweighs problems I may have photographing it.

In a sense, exploring the outdoors at night opens up a new world for us.

For example, at twilight one day I was out walking in Baridhara Lake Park when I noticed a Brown Hawk-owl perched on a branch. I had seen this owl several times before, usually in the afternoon, and only fleetingly as it flew past me. But now things were different. Hundreds of termites were flying around a nearby street light. Using the branch as its base, it repeatedly



Arboreal Porcupine, Pantanal, Brazil.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

flew out to catch a termite, return to base, and gobble it up.

I immediately ran home and got my camera and large torch light, ending with several interesting photographs.

In Brazil's Pantanal, I saw several birds and animals during a night outing. We drove on a jeep through the wilderness and used a very bright searchlight to scan the fields and trees. We found a Tapir, a Giant Anteater and a Crab-eating Fox. The Tapir is the size of a large cow and can be dangerous if approached while the Giant Anteater has a long tail that looks like an unfurled flag. The biggest surprise for me, though, was an Arboreal Porcupine that lived high up in the trees. If not for the night

outing, I would never have known such a creature existed.

In Australia's rainforest I saw a Tree Kangaroo in the night. It was walking on a branch, with its joey safely ensconced inside the pouch, its tiny feet showing through the pouch entrance.

If you want to go on night outings, you will need one or more high-powered torch lights. Never go alone because of safety reasons and never use a camera flash on birds or animals as it can cause permanent damage to their eyes. Local trees and wooded areas would be a good place to start.

.....
www.facebook.com/ikabirphotographs
or follow "ihtishamkabar" on Instagram.

Woman found murdered at Rangpur hotel

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

A woman was found murdered at a hotel in Rangpur city yesterday, a day after she boarded there with another person who has reportedly fled the place.

According to hotel records, the woman was identified as Arjina Begum (30) from Farakkabad village of Dinajpur's Biral upazila.

Saiful Islam, her husband as the records state, fled the scene yesterday morning. Police detained two persons, including Mohammad Ali, the hotel manager, to be interrogated.

Police said the two boarded Basundhara Rest House, a residential hotel at Station Road area on Thursday night, identifying themselves as a couple, and stayed there for the night.

On Friday morning, Saiful went out of the hotel, taking the room key and telling the hotel manager to fetch breakfast. Since he left, he did not return.

As the woman was not opening the door and Saiful was not returning, staffers tried to inquire about the matter and later informed police.

Police got into the room after breaking the door and found Arjina dead on the bed.

They sent the body to Rangpur Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Abdur Rashid, officer-in-charge of Kotwali police station, said the woman was strangled to death, and police are looking for Saiful.

Experts of CID and PBI also visited the hotel.

A floating hospital impacting lives

Jibontari brings healthcare to riverside communities in Barishal

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

At Babuganj upazila's Mirganj river, a three-storey ship was spotted anchored at the dock during a recent visit by this correspondent. What seemed like a passenger vessel at first glance turned out to be a floating medical facility that treats some 90-150 patients a day.

The "Impact Jibontari" is a forty-foot long ship that functions as a hospital, specialising in eye treatment, along with ear-nose-and-throat services.

"The number of patients is high in Barishal region, and many of them are not affluent enough to afford healthcare," said Md Alauddin, administrator of Impact Jibontari Hospital (IJH).

This is especially true for remote areas around rivers, he continued. "Our goal is to provide affordable medical services to the people in these areas."

But many also come to the hospital from far and wide to avail medical services at a comparatively low cost.

"I came here from Barishal city as I have severe ear pain," said Aroti Majumder (65).

Sanjoy (27) said he came to the hospital with his club foot troubles from Patuakhali's Mirganj upazila.

"Most patients come here with retinal issues, and some with nose, ear and throat, and club foot issues," said Dr Mahatab Hossain of the hospital. "Besides some

eye operations including cataract surgery, children with orthopaedic birth defects are operated here at a cheap cost."

"For outdoor, medical services are provided for Tk 50. Besides, cataract surgeries are done at Tk 3,000," Dr Mahatab added.

Apart from weekends and holidays, four doctors attend to patients every day.

"Even if someone is unable to pay, we still provide services. We do not approach our service commercially," said Alauddin.

According to IJH, Impact Foundation was established in 1993 in Bangladesh. The IJH was established later in 1999.

Its facilities include 10 beds and two operation theatres, and a speedboat to transport patients. So far, the organisation has provided services to about five lakh patients and at least one lakh patients have undergone surgery.

"But we cannot go to places that are too remote, or have low-hanging bridges," the administrator told The Daily Star. Praising the initiative, Dr Monowar Hossain, civil surgeon of Barishal, said, "Many from rural areas can avail the hospital's services at a minimal cost."

He said in delivering much-needed medical care to remote communities at minimal patient cost, the floating hospital is indeed having an impact, improving many lives.



PHOTO: STAR

Stepping up for menstrual health amid pandemic

JINAT JAHAN KHAN, TOGGLE

The pandemic's effects on middle and lower income people's finances come with a lot of invisible struggles. For example, it has become a severe impediment for underprivileged girls and women's menstrual health. As their expendable money has come down, they struggled to afford sanitary napkins and other feminine hygiene products.

However, a few voluntary organisations have stepped up to the cause, helping alleviate menstrual hygiene issues during the crisis.

TRIKONOMITI

One such organisation is Trikonomiti, an initiative of Youth Hub, a global platform for youths that works with underprivileged women's menstrual hygiene.

The project was initiated right at the dawn of coronavirus, when quarantine and shutdown restrictions were suddenly introduced in the country, making it hard for low-income women to take care of their menstrual health.

As of this month, volunteers of the organisation have distributed more than 3,000 sanitary pads at different locations of the country, including Ishwarganj, Singra, Mymensingh, Saidpur, Narayanganj, Sirajganj and Dinajpur.

Volunteers also go door to door to counsel rural women on menstrual hygiene.

Pavel Sarwar, co-founder of Youth Hub, said, "Like all other volunteering projects, Trikonomiti needs funds to continue their activities. This help comes from donations. However, most people still consider sanitary napkins a luxury good and don't have



Volunteers of Project Shurokkha hand over sanitary napkins to rural women to ensure no one fell behind on their menstrual hygiene practices, even in times of crisis.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

awareness about the importance of menstrual hygiene. Thus, they are more likely to donate on food than on sanitary napkins."

The organisation has a plan to continue this project even after the pandemic as essential hygiene products are a priority for women.

PROJECT SHUROKKHA

The Arise Help for Child Foundation's "Project Shurokkha" has multiple activities to deal with menstrual hygiene mismanagement.

The initiative was launched in the slums of Patuakhali in May 2020, and later expanded to low-income areas in Dinajpur and in the Assasuni region of Satkhira. Under this campaign, they also provide zinc and iron tablets along with sanitary napkins. Around 500 families have received this aid so far.

They also undertook an awareness campaign in Assasuni. The numbers of sanitary napkins distributed in the slums of Patuakhali, Dinajpur and Assasuni Upazila are 50, 50 and 400 respectively. Medical students accompanied the distribution teams to provide detailed guidance on why and when to use the iron and zinc tablets.

The organisation also established communication with Satkhira Medical College to mitigate or stabilise any health-related issues in the flood-affected regions of Satkhira.

Shahnaz Raihan Summy, chief executive officer of Project Banolota (of which Project Shurokkha is the first campaign) said, "There's a stigma surrounding menstrual hygiene-related essentials. Most of the time, discussions

on menstrual hygiene management is seen as a luxury to the women we talk to."

MHAPbd

Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Program in Bangladesh (MHAPbd), a social service inspired by India's "Happy to Bleed" movement has started its journey back in 2015 to help underprivileged women understand the importance of menstrual hygiene management.

Amid the pandemic, they have provided emergency hotline numbers where women can call and order for sanitary napkins. The service is free for underprivileged women, but those who are financially solvent need to pay for napkins which is eventually ploughed back to help continue the initiative.

Collaborating with a number of different organisations, MHAPbd has distributed sanitary napkins to at least 80 sex workers in Dhaka, 100 indigenous women in Bandarban and 400 women in flood-affected areas during the crisis. The organisation is also working with female tea workers to improve their health and hygiene conditions.

So far, they have reached out to over 10,000 underprivileged women to provide cotton made sanitary napkins over the last 5 years.

Farhana Haque Flora, a volunteer of MHAPbd, said, "From the very beginning, we've been distributing cotton pads, which are healthier for both women and the environment. This is because most of the sanitary napkins that are available in the market are highly absorbent, which are harmful to health and are often too expensive to afford."

Robber suspect lynched in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

An angry mob beat a suspected robber to death in Narayanganj yesterday.

Identity of the deceased, aged about 35, could not be known immediately, said Sub-Inspector Palash Kanti Ray of Araihaajar Police Station.

A group of alleged robbers attacked one Arman Hosen, a garment worker, while he was returning home by a motorcycle from Roopganj after night duty, said the SI.

Arman's relatives and neighbours started looking for him around 6am and found him tied to a tree in a mango orchard at Elamdi in Araihaajar.

They saw two people trying to start his bike, the police officer quoted witnesses as saying.

The relatives and neighbours started beating one of them after they managed to catch him, said the SI.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Narayanganj General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Arman was later admitted to the local upazila health complex, said the police officer.

They are investigating the incident, said the SI, adding that filing of a case over the death was underway.

Arman said when he reached Elamdi, around six people caught him. At one stage, he heard announcement through megaphone that robbers stormed into the area.

Two die after drinking spirit from lab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two workers died after drinking poisonous spirit from the lab of Khulna Government Girls' College.

The deceased are Parvez Biswas (29) and Rafiqul Biswas (40). Their colleague Shamim (32) was undergoing treatment at Khulna Medical College Hospital in critical state.

The duo died on Thursday night while undergoing treatment at KMCH. They were contracted to paint the lab room of Khulna Government Girls' College.

Kazi Mostaq Ahmed, OC of Khalishpur Police Station, told The Daily Star that after stealing it from college lab on Thursday three drank chemicals thinking it was alcohol. When they fell sick, relatives sent them to KMCH.

TM Zakir Hossain, principal of Khulna Girls' College, said he was looking into the matter.

'No justice for Santals in 4yrs'

Speakers say on anniversary of violence in Gaibandha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Leaders of indigenous communities in Rajshahi yesterday expressed concern over getting justice to Santal families who endured killings of their dear ones and witnessed eviction through arson in Shahebganj Bagda farm in Gaibandha's Gobindaganj upazila four years ago.

Speaking in a human chain and rally held at the city's Shaheb Bazar area yesterday, they said names of the main accused for the violence that drew countrywide outcry in November 2016 were dropped from the charges.

Organised by Jatiya Adivasi Parishad (JAP), speakers were addressing the demonstration to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the incident. They said similar programmes were held in five other districts -- Natore, Naogaon, Pabna, Dinajpur, Gaibandha and Rangpur.

On November 6, 2016, police and local goons attacked ethnic Santal families in a bid to evict them from Rangpur Sugar Mill land.

However, community leaders said the sugar mill was established on 1,842.30 acres of Santals' ancestral land.

The mill authority, they said, lost its right on the land when it ceased from its goal to produce sugar and instead, it continued leasing out the land illegally to local goons for financial benefits.

Not even the police members who were seen in video footage setting fire to houses were brought to book, they said. The evicted families were never rehabilitated so far, nor they were returned of their ancestral land, they said.



Officials of Wildlife Crime Control Unit and Rab released the rescued birds at Dhaka University's Curzon Hall premises yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

710 wild birds rescued, traders jailed in Savar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Officials of Wildlife Crime Control unit of forest department and Rapid Action Battalion rescued 710 wild birds of different species from Savar yesterday.

In a mobile court drive, the team rescued the birds and sentenced four people to one-year's imprisonment each for keeping and selling the birds.

The convicted are Usman Goni (35), Rafiqul (70), Chand Mia (28) and Rahmat (78), confirmed Ashim Mallick, inspector of Wildlife Crime Control Unit.

Ashim, who led the drive, said it was conducted at Ittkhola area under Savar around 10am. The court rescued 220 munias, 90 parrots, and 400 doves.

Later, the rescued birds were brought to Dhaka and released in the clear air of Dhaka University's Curzon Hall area.

A new Pritom Hasan on the horizon

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

From 'Esho Mama Hey' to 'Kababer Haddi', Pritom Hasan's journey in the music industry has been an unprecedented success. Behind it, however, is the willingness to work day and night – researching, honing and improving his craft. We catch up with the young music director, where he talks about his journey, future plans and more.

Congratulations on the success of 'Kababer Haddi'. How was the experience of shooting a music video at this time?

I had a blast, really. High-budget music videos are very difficult to publish nowadays, so I would thank TECNO mobile for investing and believing in me. The entire video team, including Adnan Al Rajeev, Kajal Arefin Ome, Marjuk Russell, Ziaul Hoque Palash and Sabnam Faria, among others, are to be thanked. To be honest, corporate investment can play a huge part in the overall development of the music industry, so more corporates should step up and invest, giving due respect to the artists.

Even though you have come to be known as the 'party guy' in music, you surprised everyone with the recent 'Bhenge Porona Ebhabe'. Are there more sides to you that are yet to be revealed?

I was hoping that you would ask this. I have many projects in the pipeline – in which the music and aesthetics will be unrecognisable compared to my current image. I will also be working with artistes like Farooque Bhai Project and Xefor to hopefully give something fresh sounding. If you look closely at international music industries, every artiste changes their image after 5 years or so, and you will see a new Pritom Hasan in 2021.

What are you doing in your spare time?

I love researching about music in my spare time. I also listen to underground artistes on Soundcloud, usually because they are completely detached from the mainstream music scene and can innovate to their heart's will.

If there were one thing that you could change about our music industry, what would it be?

To be honest, it would be the audiences' mindset. I would like them to be more accepting towards different and newer genres. If the listeners open their hearts towards different styles, they are the ones who reap the most rewards!

What more can you expect from you in the coming days?

I don't want to spoil too much more than what I have already revealed! However, I think of my fans before I sign up for any project, because they believe in me, and I don't want to disappoint them. That being said, I would like to say to everyone that it has been a tough year, so hang in there! I will see you on the other side of the year with many surprises!



PHOTOS: STAR



The director with the actors of the project.



A snippet from 'Mainkar Chipay'.

MAINKAR CHIPAY

An intriguing prospect with three leads

SHARMIN JOYA

ZEE5 Global recently announced their first four web originals from Bangladesh. One of them is the Abrar Athar directorial "Mainkar Chipay".

ZEE5 is the largest OTT platform for South Asian content with access in 190 countries. They unveiled the trailer of "Mainkar Chipay" during a recent virtual press conference.

"Our originals are always subscription



Sariful Razz

driven across global markets. However, as a very special initiative, we've made "Mainkar Chipay" free to watch in Bangladesh, so that anyone can watch it and feel proud," expresses Archana Anand, Chief Business Officer, ZEE5 Global. "In fact, all other locally produced originals that we have announced will be available for free in Bangladesh."



Shamol Mawla

Archana also talked about the growing market of ZEE5 Global in Bangladesh, in terms of content. "As the leading OTT platform in the market, we are bringing audiences in Bangladesh high quality and differentiated local content, featuring the best of Bangladeshi talent, and also global stories and rich narratives from different countries," she adds. "Further embodying our philosophy of growing 'Stronger Together' with Bangladesh, we also want to be the clear partner of choice for local producers and talent looking for a global platform and global recognition, and thereby be a catalyst for Bangladeshi talent to find a global stage."

Starring Afran Nisho, Shamol Mawla and Sariful Razz, the trailer of the web film, has already stirred excitement among the audience.

The cast and the director of the web project shared their experiences of working together on this action-thriller



Afran Nisho

dark comedy.

"I believe there are so many stories around us that we need to explore," says Abrar.

Considered as one of the youngest independent filmmakers of the fraternity, Abrar's debut short film "Life in Other Words" won international awards and competed at NYIFF, Bahamas, and Oscar-qualifying festivals like Short Shorts Asia.

The highly acclaimed "Koli 2.0" was Abrar's first web project, featuring Nusrat Imrose Tisha, Pijush Badhyopadhyay and Irfan Sajjad.

"Mainkar Chipay" is uniquely a Bangladeshi phrase, that suggests an odd or critical situation.

"We will be successful if the phrase is used by people around the world too!" laughs the director.

The trailer builds curiosity about the film's plot. In short, it is the story of an adventurous night between a cop, a drug

dealer and a drug addict with a car, who are faced with an odd situation.

"It is nothing educational. It is just an entertaining and intense story," shared Nisho at the press conference held recently.

"The story of this less than an hour crime thriller comedy web film is relatable to everyone," shares Abrar.

Nisho, Shamol and Razz are working together for the first time in this project. There are no prime female characters in "Mainkar Chipay."

"I have never worked with any of them before," says Abrar. "When I approached Nisho, I told him, 'I don't know anything man, but you are doing this film.'"

Luckily, Nisho was so amused by Abrar's approach that he could not say no, the director further adds.

When asked if the cast got into any 'mainkar chipay' while shooting the film, Shamol shared an interesting anecdote.

"The whole experience was great.

However, we had to shoot an action scene in a brickfield, which really felt like being in a 'mainkar chipay', says the actor. "Thankfully, nobody was injured."

The shooting of the project was done in a record time of just four nights.

"Abrar is a very good friend of mine, and this is the first time that we have worked together," says Razz, who has a cameo in the film. "Mainkar Chipay" will be available on ZEE5 from November 9, free for the audience.

'Art Against Corona' underway at Shilpakala

ZAHANGIR ALOM

A month-long art exhibition, titled *Art Against Corona*, is underway at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA). A K Abdul Momen, Honourable Minister for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, inaugurated the exhibition as the chief guest at the National Gallery Auditorium of the academy on October 27.

State Minister for the Ministry of Cultural Affairs K M Khalid, Badrul Arefin, Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and renowned artist Jamal Ahmed were present as special guests. Secretary of BSA, Md Nowsad Hossain delivered the welcome address while BSA Director General Liaquat Ali Lucky presided over the inaugural



ceremony.

"We have proved once again that we are a nation of heroes. Amid the pandemic, everyone worked shoulder to shoulder for the motherland," said A K Abdul Momen. "This event is truly commendable and an admirable



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF BSA

example for the future."

"We have been able to organise such an event because of the power that our leaders have given us, to stand beside others," added Liaquat Ali Lucky. "Such arrangements will continue in the future."

BSA is also conducting online cultural activities all over the country to keep the morale of the people strong. In the meantime, tens of thousands of artists from every district of the country, including Dhaka, have joined the *Art Against Corona* online programme. Artists of all ages, including adults, the youth, the elderly and children with special needs, have joined the *War against Corona* programme that has received a widely positive response from people across the country.

After the inaugural ceremony, a cultural programme was organised by the artists of BSA. The exhibition is open to all daily from 11 am to 6 pm till November 26, maintaining all health and safety guidelines.

Remembering legendary artist Mubinul Azim

RASHEEK TABASSUM MONDIRA

The modern art movement in Bangladesh, which started in the early 20th century, gave birth to multiple pioneering artists, gaining Bangladeshi art international recognition. One of the pioneers of modern art in Bangladesh, Mubinul Azim, enriched the Bangladeshi art scenario through his brilliant creations, along with other pioneering legends.

Born on November 24, 1934, Mubinul Azim passed away in 1975, at the age of 41. Marking the legendary painter's 45th death anniversary on November 1, *The Daily Star* caught up with Momtaz Azim, widow of Mubinul Azim, as she reminisces countless anecdotes about her late husband.

Despite his short span of life, Mubinul Azim presented the world with a treasure trove of creations, starting from sketches, oil paints, watercolours to experimenting with various materials, nylon, cement, sand, jute and clothes among others. "He used to love experimenting with different materials and loved to create various artworks with unconventional materials," shared Momtaz Azim.



Mubinul Azim with his wife Momtaz Azim.



(L) The artist in his studio. (R) Artworks by Mubinul Azim.

student of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin and later was given a stature next to the legendary artist upon his brilliance. "He was addicted to painting since childhood and as an artist, he had a completely different world of his own," shared Momtaz Azim.

The 1950-1960 time frame was the most revolutionary for modern and contemporary Bangladeshi artists, around the time, Azim along with other counterparts introduced various forms of modern, abstract, abstract-impressionist and abstract-expressionist art. Azim

was considered a prominent and pioneering artist of Pakistan at the time. Azim's career as a painter started when he moved to Karachi in 1957, where he worked as a teacher at an art institution and later in the Alliance Francaise Karachi, he also worked as a lecturer at Pak-American Centre in Karachi, Pakistan.

Azim had an intricate and individualistic style of painting, his exceptional styling of colour treatment and composition, continues to mesmerise aesthetes till now. Brilliant in design and texture, nature and its various elements found their way into Azim's canvas, with unique, bright colours and forms. Passionate about intrinsic details, Azim also constructed artistic impressions of modern life and portrayed them with elegance. The charm and bitterness, the appeal and longings and other different aspects of city and country life came alive in

his canvas.

Mubinul Azim's brilliant creations made him a favourite among the elites and high officials of Pakistan, several of his works were portrayed in official buildings including a portrait of Quaid-I-Azam in the National Parliament.

In 1964, the former Pakistan president Ayub Khan presented



King Birendra of Nepal, a painting by Mubinul Azim. "The painting mesmerised the King and he later invited Mubin to visit Nepal, but unfortunately the trip never happened," shared Mrs Azim.

After the Liberation War, Azim returned to Dhaka for good and completely immersed himself in the world of art. Azim painted three portraits of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, one of them found its way into Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's personal collection. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman presented the renowned

BBC journalist, Sir William Mark Tully, reputed for his coverage of the Liberation War, a painting by Mubinul Azim in 1974, as a gesture of appreciation.

Throughout his career, Azim held 17 solo exhibitions and 37 group art exhibitions in the country and abroad. In his honour, three solo exhibitions were arranged at Dhaka

discussions on Azim and his works. Momtaz Azim's contributions and sacrifices have played an important role in Mubinul Azim's illustrious career and even after years of his demise, she continues to preserve and collect these valuable works of art.

Azim's paintings are showcased in several places including Bangladesh



National Museum, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Bangladesh Biman, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, Bangladesh Bank, Jeddah Airport, Sonali Bank- London Branch and Dhaka Club among other monumental landmarks.

It was a huge loss for the new nation of Bangladesh, in 1975 to lose one of its most brilliant artists so early in life. Mubinul Azim's contribution to the art movement of Bangladesh has immortalised the late artist through his invaluable creations.



Satireday US Election Predictions: Put your money on the rich, white man and other tricks

SATIREDAY WFH BED

If you are a betting man and you want to win some money during this year's US elections, then put your money on the rich, white man.

Historically, America has always voted for rich, white men and the trend is set to continue. Looking at your candidate pool – the relevant one anyway – you may be shocked to see that both the candidates fit the bill.

That's when you quickly pore over US

media outlets to see who has the best chances to win. Doing this, you will have more biased information than ever. You can basically put any candidate on the pedestal depending on your choice of media. Looking for bipartisan options? They no longer exist. But at least you will still have enough information to seem like you are making an informed choice.

During your reading, you may become confused coming across the term "orange man". This basically is false colourism, where people against the idea of white

supremacy or politics based on colour still choose to talk about colour. Don't get too wrapped up in this and move on. Colour doesn't matter; potential for toxicity does.

Another quick way to gauge who will win is to look at their talking points, beyond economy. The candidate most in tune with whatever the latest outrage is will be set to win. Sincerity doesn't really matter at this point in time, but talking points do.

If you want to make your bets on who the best candidate is, then you might as well stop playing and just bet on 'other' – the

candidates even the media doesn't want you to fully know about.

In politics the world over, our choices have now boiled down to the lesser of two evils. But at least some countries allow you to vote, even if your votes are put through a formula we are yet to understand.

Finally, it is prudent to remember that the red and blue in these elections do not mean Blood and Crip, therefore Lil Wayne and 50 Cent's endorsements do not count. Don't make the same mistake many of us have already made.



Man boycotting France caught eating French fries

KARIM BENZ

Khalid, 31, a resident of the capital, was caught last night eating a plate of French fries. His friends, who caught him in the act, recorded the whole incident and uploaded a video of it on social media, where it instantly went viral with 62 likes and eight shares.

Khalid had earlier made a proclamation of boycotting French products after Karim Benzema, star footballer, was once again overlooked for the France National Team.

"I cannot believe they did not select Benzema once again. Yes, he made some mistakes, but look at his form over the past few years. He should have been selected just for that alone," Khalid had said at the time. "I will no longer buy French products until this great oversight has been corrected."

But less than a week after making the announcement, Khalid has been found to be violating it.

Khalid's friend Walid explained what he saw last night. "We heard some crunching sounds and followed the noise to the

living room. There we saw Khalid sitting down with a bottle of hot sauce in one hand and a plate of French fries on the other.

"At first we did not say anything, because we weren't sure what he was planning on doing. Maybe he would make a post with the fries and explain his views. But no, we then saw that he was actually eating the fries with no regard for what he had said," Walid explained.

Contacted, Khalid said the whole thing was being blown out of proportion. "I was boycotting the make-up brands and the noodles brand. But let's be honest, I do not really buy original products so the movement was not as impactful as I thought."

"Still I kept going. But the French fries, I call them Benzema fries. I made them with my own potatoes and I did not use anything from France for making it. It's just the name, but what's in a name," he asked. Khalid, who had gained some sort of following after his boycotts had begun, is now considered a virtue-signaling fraud.

READER'S CORNER

'Pet' animals begin waging silent freedom for emancipation

AHMED ADIB

Are you a satirist? Can you draw cartoons? If so send in your contributions to us today at satireday@thedailystar.net

Mr Cool Shaan bent over the coffee table and lifted the morning paper. He quickly scanned the usual banality of the front page: traffic accidents, pollution, corruption, rape, murder, and disappearances. Problems of the poor, mostly. At the right was a section titled "The Daily Stare", which documented area-wise reported instances of uncomfortable stares received by women in the preceding 24 hours in the city. The daily had started this recently and was apparently thinking of scaling it up to nationwide coverage.

Mr Shaan flipped the paper to its back

page. There was an ad about a movie by a knockoff group of recent film school graduates Roshuun-dhora Films, titled 'Hunger Games: Catching Garlic'. He dropped the paper and took the sunlit living room into view. It was Friday and he had slept in. He deserved a weekend-sleep, after all he worked quite hard. He stretched his torso and walked down to swing open the main doors.

Their golden retriever was in the front yard sniffing the concrete at the locked grill gate. "Miley!" He called. She turned flicking her tail, and scurried over to him past the chauffeur washing the two parked cars. "What's in your mouth?" He asked playfully as he ruffled her head with one hand and with the other gently pulled out whatever she was holding. It was a sealed envelope with no

writing. Curious but cautious, he opened it to produce a neatly folded piece of paper.

We, the House-Pet Liberation Front (Society for the Promotion of Animal Welfare), call for abolition of "ownership" of animals outside the categories of bovine, caprine, porcine, and poultry, and for a ban on calling them "pets". We grow weary of your hypocrisies of semblance of kindness, being "nice" to servile animals who don't talk or opinionate, while you live with the blood of countless cockroaches, spiders, and ants on your hands (not mosquitoes because that's mostly your own blood). You're not special; you're one of the millions of self-important people around the world who have received this message. We will draft and communicate a 6-point demand soon. Looking forward to your kind or forced cooperation (you choose). – LS

P.S. We are not familiar with Harry Potter, especially since the recent ire being drawn by its author.

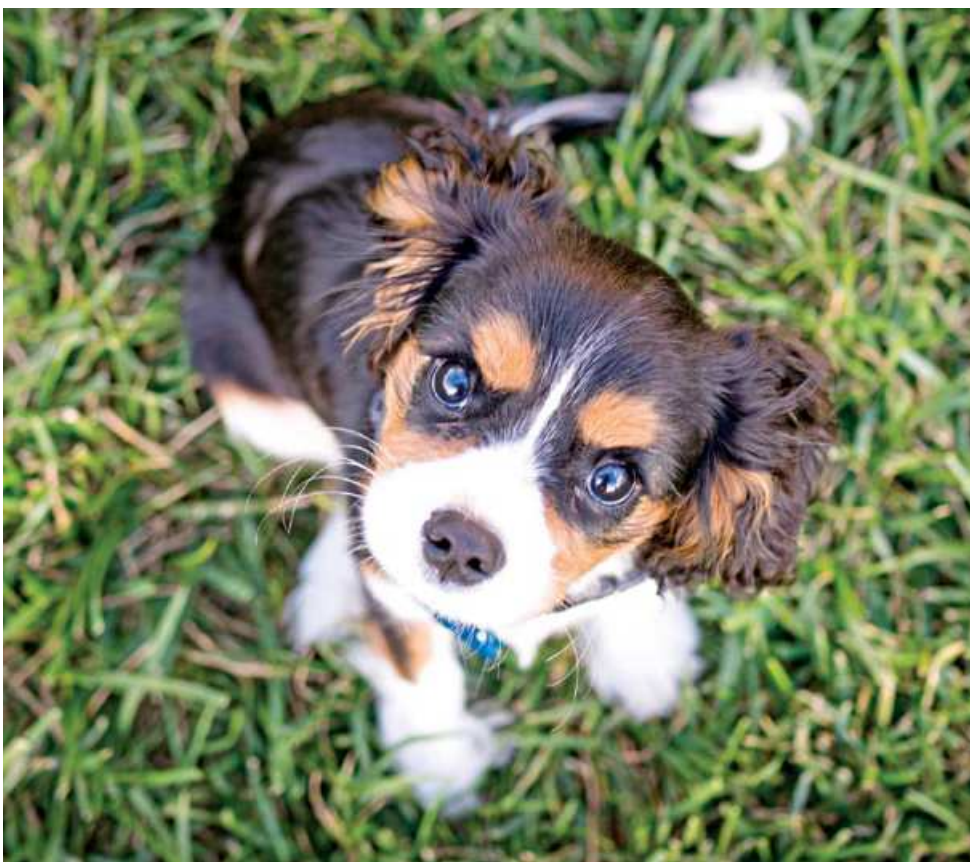
Mr Cool Shan finished reading and blinked. He took three large strides and bellowed at the chauffeur, "Where did the dog get this?" The chauffeur jumped, glanced perplexedly at the paper clutched in his employer's outstretched hand, and faltered, "I don't know, it was exchanging barks with a stray dog at the gate." Mr. Shaan's cellphone rang. It was his daughter who lived at another apartment of his.

Apparently she had just received the same letter and it was already on social media. She hadn't seen where her pet cats found the envelope but she had opened her door to find and shoo off a stray cat going to the toilet on her doormat.

"They're using the strays," whispered Mr Shaan.

He assured his daughter not to worry, hung up and dialed the mayor's personal number. As he entered rushed conversation with the mayor, Miley weaved between her owner's legs, tail tucked low. She had got the gist from the stray dog. For now some pet cats and dogs were colluding against their owners.

Many like herself were rattled and perturbed about their future security. But then peace never makes history.



The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2020, KARTIK 22, 1427 BS

Lessons from the US elections

Can the wounds of chaos be healed?

AT the time of writing this, the outcome of the nail-baiting US presidential elections is still hanging in the balance as the last votes are being counted. The deciding factor seems to be centred on a handful of battleground states where Donald Trump had an initial advantage over Joe Biden but where things seem to be changing as the largely Democrat mail in ballots are being tabulated. Whoever ultimately gets the golden 270 electoral votes to win the presidency is still to be determined although so far the chips are tilting more towards Joe Biden. Regardless of who wins, what messages have the 2020 US elections given to the world? We are impressed at the successful (till now) electoral process that has allowed an unprecedented turnout of voters to make their voices known through the ballot. It is more impressive considering that this has happened in the middle of a raging Covid-19 pandemic that has taken over 240,000 lives in the US. It reveals that this election is more crucial for the American people on both sides of the fence than ever before.

Apart from the inspiring dedication of the men and women painstakingly tabulating each ballot making sure it has been cast correctly, for the world watching, this most contentious election in US history has seen some unsavoury truths about America. The biggest shock for the world is the immense support for President Trump, who has gone out of his way to promote divisiveness, racial tension, white supremacy, discrimination, violence, denigration of the media, women and minorities, and denial of climate change, which is now being followed by an attempt to cast aspersions on the integrity of the electoral process whenever it goes against his interests. The fact that around 69 million people have voted for him shows that a huge number of Americans either endorse or overlook the abhorrent sentiments that President Trump has been fomenting. It shows that they find it acceptable that 240,000 of their fellow citizens have died under his watch because of his failure to listen to the scientists, doctors and even his own coronavirus taskforce regarding health guidelines that if implemented, could have saved thousands of lives.

The US elections have highlighted how divided American society is, how fragile it is against leadership that is based on creating chaos rather than harmony, increasing inequality and using misinformation and propaganda to control people. But even before the elections, the world had been awakened to the reality of racial inequality as well as its challenges to the basic democratic values that the US has always projected to the rest of the world. It has also shown how it is possible to challenge scientific evidence and delegitimise it through propaganda. It has shown that even something as straightforward as following basic health guidelines like wearing a mask can be made political. The most frightening revelation of the US election and the months preceding it is how easy it is to dismantle all the progress a nation has made over decades. If the next president is Joe Biden, he will have the Herculean task of uniting a bitterly divided country while combatting an ongoing pandemic and dealing with the devastating economic fallout. If it is a reelection of President Trump, it will be difficult to heal the deep wounds he has inflicted on his country, especially when he has no intention of doing so.

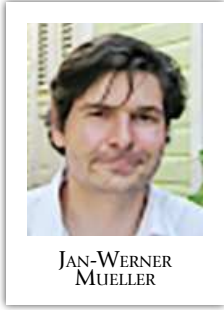
Private firm to help ease BRTA's burden in Mirpur VIC

Unfit vehicles should be removed from every road in the country

THE government has decided to hire a private company to check motor vehicles' fitness with machines, which we think is a prudent move, given the fact that the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) has not been able to cope with the demands of checking thousands of vehicles for fitness. In the last fiscal year, only 109 motor vehicle inspectors, with the help of 86 mechanical assistants, checked the fitness of 7.5 lakh vehicles—an unrelenting task indeed. Now, Computer Network System (CNS) Limited will set up a 12-lane Vehicle Inspection Centre (VIC) at BRTA's Mirpur office to test more than 400 vehicles every day. Thus far, inadequate manpower and technology has hampered the services of BRTA significantly. Given that BRTA has not been able to fill the gaps in its human resources and technology, outsourcing some of the work is possibly the next best thing. According to the current proposal, placed by the Road Transport and Highways Division and recently approved by the Cabinet Committee on Public Purchase, CNS—which is already providing several services to the BRTA—will establish, operate and maintain BRTA's Mirpur VIC for five years at a cost of Tk 105.23 crore. While BRTA officials have assured that CNS was selected for the job following competitive bidding, we feel compelled to remind the authorities that a project with an investment of over Tk 100 crore must not be allowed to go to waste as a result of inefficiency, as so many of such well-meaning projects are wont to do. There must be complete transparency in the operations over the next five years, as well as properly established and implemented systems of accountability. The government must also remain vigilant so that the private firm abstains from creating a monopoly, overcharging or any other unethical practices.

We have repeatedly asked the government to extend the capacity of the BRTA over the years, mainly to ensure road safety and bring down the significant number of deaths in Bangladesh that result from unfit vehicles plying the roads. While making the process of checking the fitness of vehicles more efficient is a positive step forward, we also urge the authorities to comply with the High Court order to set up more fitness testing centres across the country by November 23. We must keep in mind that while the Mirpur VIC checks the highest volumes of vehicles, it is still only one centre out of a maximum of 70 across the country where all of the work is being done manually, leaving room for manipulation and irregularities that could continue to compromise safety.

PROJECT SYNDICATE Truth and De-Trumpification



AMONG Democrats and many Republicans, there is a great temptation to dismiss US President Donald Trump's administration as a bizarre aberration. Just as Republicans

may try to blame the many transgressions of the past four years on Trump, hoping that their enabling role is quickly forgotten, Democrats might want to make a show of observing democratic norms, by graciously refraining from litigating the past. If so, should Joe Biden prevail when all votes in the November 3 election are counted, Trump and his administration are unlikely to be held accountable for their egregious record of corruption, cruelty and violations of basic constitutional principles.

Quite apart from political calculations, many observers—from former Democratic presidential contender Andrew Yang to distinguished jurists and historians—have argued that only tin-pot dictatorships pursue their vanquished opponents. With all-too-obvious motives of his own, US Attorney General Bill Barr has also opined that “the political winners ritually prosecuting the political losers is not the stuff of a mature democracy.” Yet these generalisations are too hasty. Trump's “lock her up” slogan, directed against Hillary Clinton in 2016, should not be answered with “lock *him* up”; but “forgive and forget” is not the only alternative.

Americans need to distinguish among three issues: crimes Trump may have committed before assuming office; corruption and cruelty committed by him and his cronies while in office; and behaviour that has exposed structural weaknesses within the broader US political system. Each requires a somewhat different response.

Historically, plenty of other countries' transitions from authoritarianism—or recovery from democratic degradation—have been characterised by a willingness to leave former power-holders unpunished. As the political scientist Erica Frantz observes, 59 percent of authoritarian leaders who have been removed from power have simply gone “on to live their normal lives.” Nonetheless, in cases where new or restored democracies did not prosecute former officials, they often established truth commissions, offering amnesty in exchange for truthful information and confessions by the perpetrators of crimes. This approach was most famously pursued by post-apartheid South Africa.

The peculiarity of the current US situation is that Trump is already under investigation for possible crimes unrelated

to his presidency. Both the Manhattan district attorney and the New York attorney general are investigating the Trump Organization for various forms of fraud. While ostensibly apolitical, Trump's business practices foreshadowed—and overshadowed—the shameless cronyism and corruption of his presidency. Even if he did not succeed in fully transforming the United States into a mafia state along the lines of Viktor Orban's Hungary, that is largely beside the point.

wanted to silence the *Cavaliere*. But the point of enforcing the law was to send a clear signal that Berlusconi's strategy of entering politics in order to gain immunity and distract from his shady business dealings would not become a precedent.

Then there is the question of Trump's actual record in office. One can find plenty of deeply objectionable policies, but it would be a mistake to abandon what President Thomas Jefferson, upon

argued, a prudent response would be to establish a separate commission to study the structural vulnerabilities of the presidency. Such an investigation may find that many informal norms—from financial transparency to relations with the Department of Justice—need to be codified. There would be nothing vengeful about this particular approach. After Watergate, Congress enacted a series of important ethics laws, which both parties tended to accept.



PHOTO: AFP

Moreover, if the investigations into the Trump Organization were simply to be dropped upon his departure from office, the charge that they were mere political machinations would appear to be justified, especially considering that the law-enforcement officials in question happen to be Democrats. On the other hand, if the investigations were to result in the incarceration of a former president, Trump's gun-toting supporters might decide to take the law into their own hands; at a minimum, the country's political divisions would deepen even further.

Bearing these risks in mind, there is no reason, in principle, why a political leader cannot be properly punished for a crime he has committed. Many leaders have been, and some have even returned to political life. Former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was forced to perform community service following his conviction on charges of tax fraud (his age brought a more lenient sentence). Today, he is sitting in the European Parliament, which makes it hard for anyone to claim that liberal judges simply

succeeding his archrival John Adams in 1801, called “the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it.”

The same cannot be said for the corruption and systematic cruelty that the Trump administration has exhibited in its response to the Covid-19 crisis, and in separating children from their parents at the border. As the Harvard law professor Mark Tushnet has suggested, a commission of inquiry should be established to investigate policies and acts that went beyond incompetence into the realm of politically motivated malevolence. It is critical that we establish a proper record of these events, perhaps by offering leniency in exchange for candid accounts. The latter should help thinking about structural reforms, making at least quid pro quo corruption and blatant human rights abuses less likely.

Finally, Trump has broken plenty of informal presidential norms, from the relatively trivial—calling people names on Twitter—to the serious: hiding his tax returns. As many US jurists have

This three-pronged approach need not distract from more urgent tasks of governance. Although it might require spending some political capital, the costs of inaction or breezily “moving on” could be even higher, as was arguably the case following Gerald Ford's pardon of Richard Nixon (who never really did admit any guilt), and the leniency shown after the Iran-Contra scandal and the George W Bush administration's extensive use of torture in pursuing its “global war on terror.”

To be sure, plenty of Republicans might fight truth-seeking efforts tooth and nail. But others could use a public inquiry focused on improving US institutions to distance themselves from Trump. After all, they have already shown themselves to be nothing if not opportunistic.

Jan-Werner Mueller, a professor at Princeton University, is a fellow at the Berlin Institute of Advanced Study and the author of the forthcoming Democracy Rules (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021).
Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2020.
www.project-syndicate.org
(Exclusive to The Daily Star)

How many more Nodis before we start taking false identification papers seriously?

MEHNAZ RABBANI

LAST year, 13-year-old Nodi was sent to Saudi Arabia as a migrant worker with a passport that falsely stated her age to be 27. On October 31, 2020, she came home to Bangladesh in a coffin. Her mother alleged that there were marks of torture on her body, and that her employer had started beating her from the first day of work, but she received no support from the recruiting agency that sent her there.

Nodi's distressing story once again shone a spotlight on the dangers being faced by female migrant workers from Bangladesh. This is not the first time we have heard of a case like this. On the first day of this month, *The Daily Star* reported that 473 Bangladeshi women have returned dead from the Middle East in the last five years. Thanks to many reports and documentaries on this issue, we are now well aware of the horrors that women face as modern day slaves in Middle Eastern households.

While the host countries must do better to protect our migrant workers employed within their borders, we must also recognise how we as a nation are failing to protect girls like Nodi. Poor families are forced to make these risky choices for their daughters, crooked middlemen cheat them, agents refuse to take responsibility for their clients after migration, and the existing regulatory system is clearly not enforced. However, there is a particular governance loophole that we often overlook, which had also contributed to our failures.

We have all seen the picture of Nodi on our newsfeed. She was obviously a child. How then, was she sent abroad for work? Why did nobody notice or flag the fact that Nodi's age was grossly misrepresented during the standard verification process of issuing a passport, and during the entire process of issuing paperwork and completing all migration formalities? Immigration officers in Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia also did not pay attention to the obvious anomaly between her appearance and her age as written on the passport. Nodi's



13-year-old Nodi died in Saudi Arabia in August, after she was sent there last year as a migrant worker on a fake passport.

agents completed several formal steps and procedures of migration using her falsified age and trafficked her through the legal channels, making it hard to believe that this was a random mistake.

In Bangladesh, changing our official age is common practice. This is so common that “what is your official age” and “what is your real age” are distinctly different questions to us. As researchers, we always ask both questions in our field surveys, knowing that the answers to the two questions are likely to be different. Nowadays, the real age, NID age, passport age and birth certificate age may all be different, depending on what purpose each document was issued for. We accept *boyosh komano* (reducing age) as a harmless violation of the law because its purpose often appears to be benign, for example, extending the time for applying to government jobs.

But this apparently harmless practice clearly has many consequences, some of which can be outright dangerous for vulnerable people like Nodi. When the official age of a girl is increased to show

that she is legally old enough to get married or work abroad, overlooking this discrepancy in age can increase child marriage and trafficking.

Ideally, a birth registration document should be issued when an individual is born, but for various reasons, this is uncommon in Bangladesh. People usually obtain identification documents when they need one. In a nationally representative rural survey in 2019 done by the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), respondents were asked why they applied for birth registration documents. The answers ranged from “for getting married”, “registering for board examinations”, “for availing social safety net allowance” to “applying for NID and/or passport”. Obviously, the age we put on a formal document depends on the purpose of getting that document. It was found that only 19 percent of the 9,942 individuals with NIDs had their correct date of birth on the card. For 36 percent, the NID age was lower than actual reported age. For

the remaining 45 percent, their NID age was higher than their reported actual age. So our traditional notion of *boyosh komano* seems to be less popular now. Rather there is a tendency for increasing the reported age, as in the case of Nodi.

In the BIGD data, there were over 3,000 individuals between the age of 14 and 18 years, but only 29 of them had NIDs to show. Of these 29 young people, most were female and all of them had increased their age on their NIDs. The survey showed 1,251 respondents with birth registration documents—half of whom had misreported their date of birth. Twenty three percent under-reported their age on their birth certificate and a little over a quarter over-reported.

When asked for the reasons behind applying for birth registration, everyone who responded with “for getting married” were female. Recently, we saw in the news that a 14-year-old died from marital rape and abuse 34 days after getting married to an older man. It is not hard to imagine what made it possible for her to be legally married at 14. We fear that in a country with a high rate of child marriage and high levels of vulnerability of female migrants, the ease with which age is falsely reported in official documents is putting our girls in greater danger.

We have laws that protect our children from trafficking, early marriage, child labour and other forms of abuse. In reality, this protection is absent for many reasons; and the ability to falsify official age, making identification documents like birth certificates and NIDs increasingly irrelevant, is emerging as an important enabling condition of such abuse. A unified and properly verified system of identification has become urgent to protect young girls from exploitation at home and abroad. It is also high time that we make this practice of changing your age socially unacceptable so that we can give children like Nodi a better chance to live.

Mehnaz Rabbani is Programme Lead of Research Policy and Governance at the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD).

We accept boyosh komano (reducing age) as a harmless violation of the law because its purpose often appears to be benign, for example, extending the time for applying to government jobs. But this apparently harmless practice clearly has many consequences, some of which can be outright dangerous for vulnerable people like Nodi.

Conflict in Ethiopia extends the Greater Middle East’s arc of crisis

JAMES M DORSEY and ALESSANDRO ARDUINO

ETHIOPIA, an African darling of the international community, is sliding towards civil war as the coronavirus pandemic hardens ethnic fault lines. The consequences of prolonged hostilities could echo across East Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

Fighting between the government of Nobel Peace Prize winning Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Tigrayan nationalists in the north could extend an evolving arc of crisis that stretches from the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict in the Caucasus, civil wars in Syria and Libya, and mounting tension in the Eastern Mediterranean into the strategic Horn of Africa.

It would also cast a long shadow over hopes that a two-year old peace agreement with neighbouring Eritrea that earned Abiy Ahmed the Nobel prize would allow Ethiopia to tackle its economic problems and ethnic divisions.

Finally, it would raise the spectre of renewed famine in a country that Ahmed was successfully positioning as a model of African economic development and growth.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Tension between Tigray and the government in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa has been mounting since PM Ahmed earlier this year diverted financial allocations intended to combat a biblical scale locust plague in the north to confront the coronavirus pandemic.

The rising tensions come as Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan failed to agree on a new negotiating approach to resolve their years-long dispute over a controversial dam that Ethiopia is building on the Blue Nile River.

US President Donald Trump recently warned that downstream Egypt could end up “blowing up” the project, which Cairo has called an existential threat.

Fears of a protracted violent confrontation heightened after the government this week mobilised its armed forces, one of the region’s most powerful and battle-hardened militaries, to quell an alleged uprising in Tigray that threatened to split one of its key military units stationed along the region’s strategic border with Eritrea.

Tension between Tigray and the government in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa has been mounting since PM Ahmed earlier this year diverted financial allocations intended to combat a biblical scale locust plague in the north to confront the coronavirus pandemic.

The tension was further fuelled by a Tigrayan rejection of a government request to postpone regional elections because of the pandemic and Ahmed’s declaration of a six month state of emergency. Tigrayans saw the moves as dashing their hopes for a greater role in the central government.

Tigrayans charge that reports of earlier Ethiopian military activity along the border with Somalia suggest that PM Ahmed was planning all along to curtail rather than further empower the country’s Tigrayan minority.

Although only five percent of the population, Tigrayans have been prominent in Ethiopia’s power structure since the demise in 1991 of Mengistu Haile Mariam, who ruled the country with an iron fist. They assert, however, that Ahmed has dismissed a number of Tigrayan executives and sidelined businessmen in the past two years under the cover of a crackdown on corruption.

Like Turkey in the Caucasus, the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa, Ahmed may be seeing a window of opportunity at a moment that the United States is focused on its cliffhanger presidential election, leaving the US African Command with no clear direction from Washington on how to respond to the escalating tension in the Horn of Africa.

Escalation of the conflict in Tigray could threaten efforts to solidify the Ethiopian-Eritrean peace process; persuade Eritrean leader Isaias Afwerki, who has no love lost for Tigray, to exploit the dispute to strengthen his regional ambitions; and draw in external powers like Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, who are competing for influence in the Horn.

The conflict further raises the spectre of ethnic tension elsewhere in Ethiopia, a federation of ethnically defined autonomous regions against the backdrop in recent months of skirmishes with and assassinations of ethnic Amhara, violence against Tigrayans in Addis Ababa, and clashes between Somalis and Afar in which dozens were reportedly injured and killed.

Military conflict in Tigray could also accelerate the flow of Eritrean migrants to Europe, who already account for a significant portion of Africans seeking better prospects in the European Union.

A Balkanisation of Ethiopia in a part of the world where the future of war-ravaged Yemen as a unified state is in doubt would remove the East African state as the linchpin with the Middle East and create fertile ground for operations by militant groups.

“Given Tigray’s relatively strong security position, the conflict may well be protracted and disastrous. (A war could) seriously strain an Ethiopian state already buffeted by multiple grave political challenges and could send shock waves into the Horn of Africa region and beyond,” warned William Davison, a senior analyst at the International Crisis Group.

A podcast version of this story is available on Soundcloud, iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, TuneIn, Speaker, Pocket Casts, Tumblr, Podbean, Audible, Patreon and Castbox.

Dr James M Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and a senior fellow at Nanyang Technological University’s S Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore and the National University of Singapore’s Middle East Institute. Dr Alessandro Arduino is principal research fellow at the Middle East Institute of the National University of Singapore.

Recognise the tragedy of November 7, 1975

MAHJABEEN KHALED

ON August 15, 1975, at dawn, the sound of gunshots and loud explosions of artillery fired at the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s Dhanmondi Road 32 residence shook people awake. On the radio, they heard the shocking announcement of Bangabandhu’s killing, along with his family members, in a brutal coup staged by a section of military officers. The political landscape of Bangladesh slid into chaos. The military killers installed Khondaker Mostaq Ahmed as the President and continued to stay beside him at Bangabhaban, from where they virtually ran the country. The army command chain broke down.

This situation outraged Khaled Mosharraf, who was at the time the chief of army staff (CGS). He decided to expose the killers of Bangabandhu and bring them to justice. Most of the officers who fought valiantly in the Liberation War and played key roles in raising the army joined hands with Khaled and staged a counter insurrection that overthrew Mostaq. Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem was appointed as the new President.

Ahead of that November 3 coup of 1975, a 1971 veteran and commander of the Dhaka-based 46th infantry brigade, Colonel Shafaat Jamil, requested the then army chief Major General Ziaur Rahman to take action against the August 15 murderers to bring back the military chain of

command, but Zia took no action. His continued inaction made his weakness for the killers clear, because Mostaq had appointed him as the army chief days after Bangabandhu’s murder.

This scenario prompted the November 3 coup leaders, led by Khaled Mosharraf, to detain Zia at his own official house while they were consolidating their position to restore the discipline of the army. At that stage, retired colonel Abu Taher emerged at the scene and the captive Zia reportedly contacted him and sought his assistance.

On November 5, 1975, a group of unruly, ordinary soldiers under the left-leaning Taher’s stewardship staged

a so called “sepoy-janata revolution”, actually discarding the *janata* or people under the banner of the Biplobi Sainik Sangstha, which later appeared to be a sporadic grouping of some soldiers, mostly belonging to some non-combatant military units.

The August 15, 1975 right wing coup plotters managed to leave the country soon after the November 3 uprising, leaving behind the soldiers and few officers of their rebel units—the Bengal Lancer (tank regiment) and 2 Field Artillery. These abandoned soldiers, being led by their sense of insecurity, quickly joined hands with Taher’s Biplobi Sainik Sangstha. They launched a campaign against Khaled

Most of the officers who fought valiantly in the Liberation War and played key roles in raising the army joined hands with Khaled and staged a counter insurrection that overthrew Mostaq.



Major General Khaled Mosharraf, Bir Uttom (1937-1975)

PHOTO: COLLECTED

and his comrades, distributing leaflets in their efforts to label him as an Indian agent in order to mislead their fellow ordinary soldiers in different units. They also spread rumours that numerous soldiers were killed by the November 3 coup leaders in several units.

On November 6, Khaled Mosharraf, along with his two compatriots Colonel Khondkar Nazmul Huda (Bir Bikrom) and Lt Colonel ATM Haider (Bir Uttom), decided to take refuge at the makeshift abode of the 10th East Bengal Regiment at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

By that time, Zia was freed by Taher’s men and the remaining plotters of the August 15 carnage. They also reached the 10th East Bengal Regiment and agitated the fellow soldiers there while two unruly officers—Major Jalil


and Major Assad—gunned down the three valiant, patriotic sons of the soil. Their hunger for blood did not stop there. Within hours, they killed many other officers and their family members as well.

A great son of the soil—Major General Khaled Mosharraf—was killed on this day, November 7. Bangladesh regards him as one of the finest commanders of the 1971 Liberation War while freedom fighters under his command treated him as a guardian angel—endowed with extraordinary bravery and brilliant natural leadership qualities.

It’s been 45 years since then. Till today, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) observe November 7 as a National Revolution and Solidarity Day and the Sepoy Janata Revolution Day, distorting history again and again. But for Bangladesh and for the people who fought for the independence of this country, today marks a very sad day. We now have a government who supported the Liberation War and who follow the principles of Bangabandhu. Therefore, we believe that the truth of November 7, 1975 can only be attained through an investigation and by bringing the criminals to justice. The dark day of November 7 should also be declared as Freedom Fighters and Soldiers Killing Day, which will finally set the record right.

Mahjabeen Khaled is a Member of Parliament and the daughter of Major General Khaled Mosharraf Bir Uttom.

QUOTABLE Quote



MUHAMMAD ALI
(1942-2016)
American professional boxer and social activist.

Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Watch part
5 Indian prince
9 Make a speech
11 Modify
13 Showed over
14 Home design
15 Some crime evidence
16 Intermittent sparkle
18 Feudal warrior
20 Bullring cry
21 Rental choice
22 Proceed slowly
23 Chop off
24 Kraken’s home
25 Checkout act
27 Fixes, as holey socks

29 Pet perch
30 Meeting record
32 Put to use
34 CPR pro
35 Moved a raft
36 Like Poe tales
38 Place
39 Inferno describer
40 Spot
41 Not new

DOWN
1 River crossings
2 Sports spots
3 Halloween treats
4 Letter after zeta
5 Arm bones
6 Yemen port
7 Halloween props

8 God of sunlight
10 Snare
12 Cornered
17 Pale
19 Japanese noodles
22 Lima’s land
24 Smoothed, in a way
25 Strikes
26 “In Cold Blood” author
27 Conk out
28 Near East native
30 Annapolis student
31 Spirited horse
33 Bound
37 Water, in the Seine


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

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 10-30

YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS


SELTROUT PORKY
TROUT ARENA
TRINGO AARON
ACE WARLOCK
WARDEN TEE
WARTS TEE
SAME HEED
SAM DEER
EYE WARHOL
WARBLER APE
EMILY EVITA
RECUR DATED
SNARE LIDS

BEETLE BAILEY BY MORT WALKER



THIS IS NOT MY IDEA OF A FUN DOUBLE DATE. WHAT'S WRONG? I'M OUTNUMBERED AND OUTRANKED. ELIXIR RESTAURANT.

BABY BLUES BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



ZOE, YOUR GRADES HAVE DROPPED SINCE YOU JOINED THE COOL GIRLS SQUAD. WHO CARES? AND HAMMIE, YOUR SCORES ARE... PERFECT? SCHOOL IS AWESOME THIS YEAR! I'VE ENTERED BIZARRO WORLD. I'D GO WITH YOU, BUT I HAVE HOMEWORK.



POETRY

Sourav's Song

JOHN DREW



No need to wonder what you are:
Bengal's brightest, closest star
in the night sky - though on the Earth
none noticed your auspicious birth.

Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jain
plead that you be born again
to sit beneath a tree and sing,
the whole world held on one taut string.

Though Man is made of river-mud
your music fills our veins like blood:
the known song of an unknown bird,
though seldom seen so often heard

that dervish, sweeper, weaver, king
join hands to dance in one great ring.
A friend to guide us, that you are,
saint and singer, Lalon Shah.

John Drew has lived on both sides of the Himalayas.

A Pair of Lalon Songs

TRANSLATED BY SUBRATA AUGUSTINE GOMES

Man is the Measure

(bhobe manush guru nishtha jar)

Serve your human guru first
With your heart and soul
If you feel like fulfilling
Your yearnings in this world.

In lakes and rivers and canals
It's the self-same water that prevails,
My lone lord roams from home to home
In humans he turns manifold.

Pure light at first, he anon
Assumed myriad forms then on—
The truth is evident to the enlightened,
Man's the final form of God it's told.

Arguments won't take you far;
Want him? Listen to your heart.
Siraj Sain warns: "Listen, Lalon,
In dialectics don't get enthralled."

The Cosmic Lover

(Allah, ke bojhe tomar opar leele)

O Allah, into your endless plays
Who could delve—
You call out to Allah
Being Allah yourself.

When a form you'd yet to need
You were but a lucent seed.
The three worlds then affirmed your skills
In countless shapes and tilts and lilts.
Your exhaled, gossamer
Word— we know as holy writ,
The up-draft flower, down-draft messiah, you
Into Adam's breast breathed it.



Those that have gained self-knowledge
Partake of the Godhead's secret bliss;
Niranjan afloat, that flawless gem,
Lalon seeks in wilderness.

Subrata Augustine Gomes is a poet and a translator.

Fakir Lalon Shah: Subjects, Sites, and Signs

AZFAR HUSSAIN

The interpretation of our reality through patterns not our own serves only to make us ever more unknown, ever less free, ever more solitary. — Gabriel García Márquez

Fakir Lalon Shah—who orally composed thousands of songs in Bengali—died on October 17, 1890—on Kartik 01, 1297 (the Bengali year). This year, then, marks his 130th death anniversary. Of death—of its being and non-being, its arrival-before-arrival—Lalon sings on varying registers, as he also sings of life and love and liberation. But what about his own birth? The actual details of his birth are still unknown, while his own silence surrounding his birth is persistently audible like a waterfall! But it is generally believed that he lived for 116 years. The year 1774, therefore, is usually taken to be the year of his birth. Lalon lived, worked, and died in the village of Chheuriya, near Kushtia (a town in Bangladesh), during British colonial rule.

It is a formidable challenge to introduce an unusual figure like Fakir Lalon Shah, given that his work tends to resist translation and even interpretation, let alone hermeneutic excavation, by those who are non-initiates, although interpretive violence continues to be perpetrated on him. Contrary to certain conventional characterizations, Lalon—who had no formal or institutional education—is not a mystic or a metaphysician in

sure. And his *Faqiri*—integral to his life and work—designates, among other things, a thoroughgoing path of *sadhana* under the guidance of the *Guru*—a path constituted by life-changing yet life-realizing revolutionary practices, a path that organically combines the musical and the poetic and the political all at once, to say the least—although a caveat must be registered here: Lalon cannot be pigeon-holed into a water-tight compartment in the final instance.

It is also important to point out that Lalon has been not only canonized—and even assimilated into academia—by the Bengali middle class, but also commodified, corporatized, de-historicized, even de-radicalized. The question here, however, is not one of rescuing and recuperating a pure Lalon Fakir as such, but it at least involves our struggle to make sense of his work in its actual contexts. And to speak of such contexts—the historical one included—is to call attention to the Nadiya school of thought—a movement in its own right—that flourished under the influence of Islam during the time of Alauddin Husain Shah, who ruled from 1494 to 1519.

That was indeed a time which witnessed a remarkable efflorescence of Bengali literary works accompanied

radical figures as “tin paagal,” ones who variously inform and inflect and energize Lalon's positions and practices, although, of course, Lalon inaugurates his own, even new, mode-of-being in that tradition which was fundamentally opposed to hierarchies and oppressions based on caste, class, religion, and patriarchy, for instance.

Within—and ranging beyond—that tradition, Lalon could sing: “People ask, what is Lalon's caste? / Lalon says, my eyes fail to detect/ the signs of caste.” And then he moves in the direction of questioning and even unsettling the scriptures-based semiotics of discrimination in the same song: “A Muslim is marked by the sign/ of circumcision; but how should/ you mark a woman? / If a Brahmin male/ is known by the thread he wears, / how is a woman known?”

2
Owing to space constraints, it is impossible to do justice to the entirety of Lalon's work, massive as it, nor is it possible to dwell on the details of profound transactions and tensions between Sri Chaitanya and Lalon Fakir. However, at the risk of simplifying many issues, I will call attention to only a few areas of Lalon's work that I find significant.



and the *Param* (the ‘Absolute’), suggesting their indivisibility, which, however, is not an axiomatic given as such, but which is to be achieved via the path of *sadhana* under the active guidance of the *Guru*. In fact, in Lalon's songs, the dichotomy between what are called “Subject” and “Object” is also dissolved in the One. And the One—by no means a transcendental state of being—comes to reside in the body itself.

The body, indeed, constitutes the key site with which Lalon's songs and practices remain persistently preoccupied. As Lalon puts it in one of his songs: “What you are frantically looking for across the sky and the earth/ resides in this body.” In yet another song: “If you don't know your body/ How would you know the real theory of the self?” It's instructive that Lalon directly uses the word “tattva” (theory)—and *dehottatva* (theory of the body) and *atmattatva* (theory of the self) as well—in his songs on numerous occasions, giving us the impression that theorizing-as-practice and creativity are by no means mutually exclusive. In fact, Lalon even theorizes directly yet poetically and profoundly in the spaces of his songs, running against the grain of those anti-theoretical, self-absorbed aesthetes, who, under the spell of bourgeois and even colonialist poetics, tend to harbor the very idea that theory disfigures or damages the poetic as such.

In any event, Lalon's preoccupation with the body is significant on more scores than one. Of course, the body remains almost a universal constant in a number of mystical traditions across the world—from, say, Blake to the Bauls. The old *tantric* tradition itself, preceding the Nadiya school of thought, valorizes the body to varying

degrees, while, however, tending to use the body as a means to accomplishing something—the *Param*, for instance—positing thereby a gap between the two. But what is distinctive about Lalon is that he closes that gap, suggesting that the body, being, and the *Param* are indivisibly One, their *differentia specifica* notwithstanding.

In other words, for Lalon, the body cannot simply be reduced to a means or a mode of mediation, given that the very being and the *Param*—and by extension, the universe itself—reside together inside the body which remains manifest, immanent, and active all at once in ways in which it turns out to be more than a biological body as such. The hint here is this: There's nothing outside the body and, by extension, there is nothing outside human beings themselves.

But Lalon is not a traditional “radical humanist,” nor is he an anthropocentric thinker in the final instance, given that he remains acutely attentive to the entirety of living beings, to all life-forms, and that—in his work and world—the body itself cannot be separated from Nature and vice versa. To simplify the point: For Lalon, to hurt Nature is to hurt the body itself. As for the ways in which Lalon sings of *manush bhojona*—his foremost and fundamental concern—Lalon decisively runs against the grain of the “I”-based Renaissance humanism that remains dominant in the Western world. In fact, Lalon aims at the dissolution of the self-invested “I” in favor of the One, which, however, remains more material than mystical in that the One and the body—materially present as it is—remain inseparable from one another.

Indeed, Lalon's musical enactment of the embodied One blasts open the continuum of colonial power/ knowledge that otherwise dominated the minds and imaginations of many of his ostensibly progressive contemporaries in the nineteenth century. Indeed, Lalon can be regarded as the most remarkable oppositional figure—an exemplary anti-casteist, anti-patriarchal, anti-colonial figure—in undivided Bengal in the nineteenth century.

Given the extraordinary range and rigor of Lalon's preoccupations, I've hitherto only scratched the surface of his work. But I hope one can at least make sense of some of his concerns that remain relevant to our struggles against all forms and forces of oppression and injustice in a world devastated by capitalism, colonialism/imperialism, racism, and patriarchy, profoundly interconnected as they are.

Azfar Hussain teaches in the Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural Studies Department within the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies, Grand Valley State University in Michigan, and is Vice-President of the Global Center for Advanced Studies, New York, USA.



মানুষ ছেড়ে কেপা রে তুই মূল হারাবি
মানুষ ভজলে সোনার মানুষ হবি....

the Western senses, nor is he even a “musician” in the traditional sense of the term. He is not even a *Baul*, as he never identified himself as one, nor is he a Sufi *sensu stricto*.

But it is possible to identify in his work a unique and even unprecedented *mélange* of Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, and Jainist elements. Put another way: Lalon's songs and practices—in a number of instances—embody and enact an interplay among certain aspects of the Buddhist *Shahajiyi* path, Gaudiya *Vaishnavism*, and even the *Kartabhaja*, while he also ranges beyond them resisting facile syncretism and eclecticism.

For me, then, Lalon is simultaneously a song-composer, singer, poet, thinker, theorist, practitioner, and a *Faqir* for

by more than one Bengali adaptation of the *Mahabharata* and the production of the great *Manasamangal Kavya* by Bijay Gupta, one who—as the literary historian Sukumar Sen tells us—compares Alauddin Husain Shah to none other than Arjuna himself. And, no less significantly, this was a time that witnessed the rise of the figure of Sri Chaitanya—a fifteenth-century *sadhak*, based in Nadiya and known for his influential *Achintya-Bheda-Abheda tattva* (which can roughly be translated as the “inconceivable difference-and-oneness-unity theory”), one that Lalon re-invents and re-mobilizes on a range of registers.

In addition to Chaitanya, one should mention two other figures such as Nityananda and Advaita Acharya. Lalon himself characterizes the trinity of these

So, as for the Chaitanya-Lalon relationship, one may easily identify their common concern with the *One* and the *body* in the first place. In a song, Lalon himself makes it clear how he dissolves “the raft of signs, the marks of caste” in the deluge of the One; while, in another song, Lalon musically turns to the mathematical in order to underline the One thus: “Four zeroes after nine/ Ninety thousand—says the document:/ But erase all the zeroes/ You've the play of only nine./ Deduct eight from nine/ You've the One in the end.”

By no means akin to the Greek philosopher Parmenides's cosmic principle that “all is One,” Lalon's “One” dissolves the borders and boundaries between the living being

Shakib returns and gets busy

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan returned to Bangladesh from the United States in the early hours of Friday amid immense enthusiasm and anticipation regarding his impending return to cricket upon completion of one-year ban, which was lifted on October 29.

Shakib, world's number one all-rounder in ODIs who has a slew of commercial endorsements, wasted little time in getting busy with one such commitment early in the morning. Less than 12 hours after his arrival, Shakib attended the launching ceremony of a super shop, with people thronging to watch him from close quarters as social distancing remained as a huge concern.

When asked for an opinion on general guidelines for returnees from abroad, Dr Habibur Rahman, spokesperson for Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), said if anyone comes out of home during two-week's quarantine period, he/she would break quarantine rules.

"If the passengers show proof of a recent negative test, we ask them to go into home quarantine for 14 days. But if the passengers arrive without any certificate, we put them in institutional quarantine for 14 days," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Prime minister Sheikh Hasina, on Sunday, asked authorities concerned to ensure proper screening and compulsory quarantine of the returnees from abroad in the context of the second wave of Covid-19 in Europe and



elsewhere.

"The time has come once again to make sure proper screening and quarantine of the returnees from abroad. Measures as taken before would have to be put in place again at each of the airports and other ports across the country to confirm whether anyone is entering the country with coronavirus," she said.

According to former unit head of Epidemic Control and Preparedness of ICDDR,B, Anwarul Islam Mitu, even if a passenger has a corona negative certificate upon arrival, there remains a chance for the person to get infected and it is important for the passenger to stay at home quarantine.

"Obviously, it's risky even for a person who has got a corona negative certificate. You might have boarded the aircraft from the United States with a corona negative certificate, but you could still get infected inside the aircraft or at the terminal.

"Although our airport authority is now well equipped with screening passengers, still it is the person's duty to stay at home quarantine for at least ten days after arriving from abroad. In other countries, authorities install a tracking software on all the passengers after arrival and monitor their activities and I think we should have something like that in Bangladesh," said Anwarul.

Bangladesh Cricket Board CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury, however, said Shakib will be under the health guideline of the board once he consults with the BCB medical team.

"He returned with a corona negative certificate. He is yet to consult the BCB's medical team and once he does that, he will be under the health guideline of the BCB," said Chowdhury.

The Daily Star tried to contact Shakib for a statement on this, but the cricketer did not answer the calls and messages.



A group of female footballers wait for their turns to get tested for Covid-19 at the Mugda General Hospital yesterday. Those who will return negative tests will take part in the women's football league, which resumes today in Kamalapur following an eight-month halt due to the pandemic.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Nepal fixtures a lesson for posterity

SPORTS REPORTER



The resumption of football activities in Bangladesh has become reality amid the new normal with the arrival of the Nepal national football team on Thursday and the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is apparently seeing the two FIFA international friendlies against the Himalayan nation as a dress rehearsal for organising domestic competitions as well as next year's World Cup Qualifiers.

With only a week before the first friendly on November 13 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, the BFF has all but taken all initiatives to hold both matches in a safe environment, maintaining Covid-19 safety guidelines.

As per FIFA guidelines, a member association can hold internationals in the presence of full-capacity crowds, limited spectators or without spectators amid the pandemic. The BFF has decided to allow spectators on a limited scale -- one-third of the 24,000-capacity BNS, to watch the matches.

The spectators however must wear masks, maintain distance while sitting and have body temperatures scanned before entering the stadium, while the authority has to disinfect practice venues and the stadium before the match.

"It is a big challenge for us to ensure everything in line with the Covid-19 guidelines because we haven't had any experience of hosting matches amid the pandemic," BFF competition manager Zaber Bin Taher Ansari told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Other than the health aspect, the rest will proceed as usual," Ansari said. "We

are taking the arrangement of hosting Nepal friendlies as a dry run or rehearsal of the upcoming season and World Cup Qualifiers.

"As this will be the first time that we impose health restrictions during the match, we will be learning the barriers and limitations of implementing those on the spectators, players and officials. After gathering the knowledge, I think we will be able to hold our domestic matches and World Cup Qualifiers more efficiently," opined Ansari, who has been involved with the arrangement of all international matches in Bangladesh for a long time.

The sitting arrangement and maintaining social distance in the gallery is going to be the big challenge for the BFF as there are no permanent seats at the BNS at the moment.

"Our spectators are not habituated to maintaining all these while watching matches from the gallery and it will be hard for us to keep them in the loop of health guidelines during matches. We have split the Western and Eastern galleries into four parts to control it as there will be some volunteers with loud speakers to make the spectators aware. They even may take help from police to maintain disciplines in the gallery," said Ansari, adding that employees from the city corporation will disinfect the practice venue and the stadium before the match.

Ansari also said there will be no handshaking among players, officials and guests before and after the match while the number of ball-boys will be only six instead of 12. But they will have to wear masks and sanitise their hands frequently and the reserve-bench players don't need to maintain social distance in the dugout but they must wear the masks.



Hornets SC and IMC Sports Academy players look above as the ball rolls into the cage during the final of the Bangabandhu U-23 Women's 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday. Hornets SC won the match 6-5 to become unbeaten champions in the six-team tournament.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Facebook deletes

ISSF page

PTI

The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) says it is experiencing an "unpleasant situation" as social networking site Facebook has deleted the global body's page from its platform without any intimation. This has prompted the ISSF to start a campaign '#unblock_ISSF_facebook'.

Besides Twitter and Instagram, shooters from across the world rely on the ISSF Facebook page for updates from the sport's governing body. The page was created on January 14, 2010.

"An unpleasant situation happened yesterday, and Facebook has deleted the ISSF page from the social network without reason or warning," shooting's apex body said in a statement on Thursday.

UEFA asks FIFA to review handball rule

AFF, Paris



UEFA have asked FIEA president Gianni Infantino to change the handball rule to stop "growing frustration" following a spate of penalties awarded for the offence, European football's governing body confirmed on Thursday.

In a letter to Infantino, UEFA chief Aleksander Ceferin asked that football's lawmakers adjust the handball rule -- which has been in place since March last year -- so that referees can once again judge whether there is intent when a player handles the ball.

"The attempt to strictly define the cases where handling the ball is an offence has resulted in many unfair decisions which have been met with growing frustration and discomfort by the football community," said Ceferin's letter, which was sent on October 27.

The contents of the letter were confirmed to AFP's sister sports agency in Germany, SID. The news of the letter comes a day after the latest controversial spot-kick award, which put Chelsea two goals ahead in their 3-0 Champions League win over Rennes on Wednesday.

Rennes defender Dalbert, who had already given away the first penalty which had put Chelsea ahead, was sent off for a second booking following a VAR review when a Tammy Abraham shot bounced off his foot onto his arm. The decision, and Timo Werner's cool finish from the spot, effectively killed off the Ligue 1 side's chances of getting a result at Stamford Bridge in their first ever season in the Champions League. Rennes president Nicolas Holveck was livid after the defeat in London, calling referee Felix Zwayer "the man of the match".

"I would like someone to clearly explain to me the rules for handballs in the box ... the score went to 2-0 without Alfred (Gomis, the Rennes goalkeeper) having to make a save." It was one of many penalty decisions which have angered players and managers and which Ceferin in his letter suggested was against the "spirit of the game".

Ceferin wrote to Infantino as it is the FIEA-controlled International Football Association Board.

Lille end Milan's unbeaten run

AFF, Paris



Europa League

Yusuf Yazici brought AC Milan and Zlatan Ibrahimovic down to earth with a bump on Thursday with all three goals in a 3-0 Europa League win over the seven-time European champions.

The 39-year-old Ibrahimovic had been one of the stories of the early part of the season after firing seven goals in four league games to take the Italian giants top of Serie A, but it was Yazici, who is yet to start in Ligue 1 this season, who stole the show with his hat-trick at the San Siro.

Yazici's goals put Lille, who are unbeaten in all competitions this season, one point ahead of Milan who lost for the first time since Braga in a match that was never in doubt from the moment the

Celtic are bottom of Group H after being hammered 4-1 at home by Sparta Prague.

"I thought we could be more dangerous, but against such a fast team once we went 2-0 behind the game got complicated. They punished us for every mistake," said Milan coach Stefano Pioli after his side's 24-match unbeaten run came to an end.

Incredibly it was Yazici's second Europa League hat-trick of the season following his treble in Lille's 4-1 win over Sparta Prague in the opening round of fixtures, taking his European tally to six.

KANE'S DOUBLE CENTURY

Kelechi Iheanacho was the star for Leicester City as they made it three wins from three with their 4-0 thumping of Portuguese side Braga in a match that was never in doubt from the moment the

Nigerian opened the scoring in the 21st minute.

Fellow Premier League side Arsenal also maintained their 100 percent record with a 4-1 win over Molde of Norway.

Earlier Harry Kane scored his 200th goal for Tottenham Hotspur as he helped fire Spurs top of Group J -- level on six points with Royal Antwerp and LASK -- with a 3-1 win at Ludogorets.

Kane opened the scoring for Jose Mourinho's side with just 12 minutes on the clock when he headed home Lucas Moura's corner to bring up his double century of Tottenham goals in his 300th match for the club. "I'm delighted with that and I probably could have scored a couple more in that 45 minutes," said Kane.

"It's a great milestone to reach and hopefully there are a few more to come."



(L) Lille's Yusuf Yazici jumps in the air to celebrate his hat-trick against AC Milan in their Europa League fixture at San Siro on Thursday. The Turkish midfielder, who is yet to start in Ligue 1 this season, has already grabbed two hat-tricks in three Europa League matches for the French side. (R) England captain Harry Kane celebrates his historic 200th goal for Tottenham Hotspur during their 3-1 win away to Ludogorets.



PHOTO: TWITTER/REUTERS



Volleyball coach Mehdi no more

SPORTS REPORTER

Renowned volleyball coach Golam Rasul Khan Mehdi, also a former national volleyball player, breathed his last at a hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He was 65.

Mehdi left behind his wife, two daughters and a host of well-wishers to mourn his death.

Mehdi, also an executive member of Bangladesh Volleyball Federation (BVF) and the volleyball secretary of Wari Club, died of Covid-19 at Green Life Hospital, said a press release from BVF.

Mehdi started his coaching career in 1983 after completing coaches' course from Patiala, India and took charge of the national team during 1989 SA Games in Islamabad. He was last the head coach of the national women's team in SA Games held in Nepal in 2019.

The Steel Revolution Continues

Introducing
BSRM Xtreme
B500 DWR
the tough steel

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES
World's Largest VRM

Country sees record rainfall in 9 months

It contributed to lengthy flood this year, hampered agricultural production; experts point to global warming

MOHAMMAD AL MASUM MOLLA

In a shift from the usual weather pattern, the country has witnessed around 50 percent more rainfall in the first nine months of this year, compared to the average rainfall in the corresponding period during the last 30 years.

This is a result of global warming and has implications for the country's agricultural production, said experts.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), an average 363.621 millimetres of rainfall was recorded in the country between January and September.

The average rainfall recorded in the same period during the last 30 years was 246.155mm, shows Met office data.

Due to excessive rain, the country has also experienced the second longest spell of flooding this year since 1998, when the floods stayed for 63 days. This year, the duration of the floods was 61 days -- from July 27 to September 30.

Experts say the massive rainfall this year was due to a warm air mass, which is a consequence of global warming.

"Global warming is a reason. More heat means more vapour and more rain. The weather is becoming unpredictable and at the same time, uncertainty is increasing," said Professor Emeritus Ainun Nishat of Brac University's Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research.

He said the Bay of Bengal is becoming warmer than ever before.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Wearing PPE, a staffer of the capital's Mugda General Hospital takes sample from a woman for Covid-19 test. The woman, Rupali Begum, along with her child came from Noakhali for her surgery, but doctors asked her to get tested for coronavirus before the operation. Meanwhile, hospital sources said the number of people wanting to get tested there has increased lately.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Four of a family killed in B'baria road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Four members of a family, including a child, were killed and three others injured when a truck hit two other vehicles at Syedabad in Kasba upazila yesterday.

Citing witnesses, Abdur Razzak, sub-inspector of Khatihata Highway Police Station, said the truck heading towards Cumilla lost control after hitting a car coming from the opposite direction around 4:15pm. The truck then crashed into a CNG-run auto-rickshaw and fell into a roadside ditch, he added.

Three died on the way to Brahmanbaria General Hospital, while another died on the way to a hospital in Dhaka. They were passengers of the CNG-run auto-rickshaw.

The injured are car driver and passengers and they were undergoing treatment at the hospital.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

SUBSTANDARD EDUCATION

Pvt medical college shut in Rajshahi

225 students have to be shifted to other colleges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The health ministry ordered suspension of student admission at Shah Makhdum Medical College in Rajshahi because of the "poor state of education".

Deputy Secretary Badrun Nahar of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in a letter on November 2 asked the principal of the private college to suspend admission from the 2020-21 session.

In another order, Badrun asked the Health Education Division to transfer the college's students to other private medical colleges affiliated with Rajshahi Medical University.

In March last year, ministry officials visited Shah Makhdum Medical College following allegations of violations of the Private Medical College Establishment and Management Policy 2011.

The team of officials made a set of recommendations to improve the college. Another team of ministry officials in a later visit found that the recommendations had been ignored, says the last week's order.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Recognition will bring peace in subcontinent

November 7, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

INDO-BANGLA TALKS

A brief joint press statement issued at the conclusion of the Indo-Bangla talks held in Delhi notes that both sides are in complete agreement that the first step towards normalisation of relations and establishment of durable peace in the subcontinent is the recognition of existing realities. It also deplores that a large number of Bangladesh nationals are still being held in detention in Pakistan as political hostages in increasingly worsening conditions and are being prevented from returning home. During the talks a number of bilateral matters are discussed.

The situation in Southeast Asia and the role of different countries towards the subcontinent are also discussed.

REPATRIATION OF 300 BANGALEES

The repatriation from Pakistan of nearly 300 stranded Bengalis through the good offices of the International Committee of Red Cross is expected to start from November 13, 1972.

UN DELEGATES HAPPY

With the passage of the constitution in the record time of nine months after liberation and the announcement of the date of general elections, Bangladesh has set up an example of political

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Girl arrested for 'hurting religious sentiment'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenage girl has been arrested in the capital's Mirpur for "hurting religious sentiments" through social media.

Sajedul Islam Sajal, senior ASP of Rab-4, told The Daily Star that they arrested Ishrat Jahan Reilly, 19, in Darussalam area around 8:00pm on Thursday.

"She has been posting provocative posts about religion for a long time through her seven Facebook IDs, two Facebook pages and a Twitter account," said the Rab official.

After her multiple Facebook IDs became inactive, she opened new IDs and ran religious incitement campaigns, the official claimed, adding that screenshots of those contents have been seized.

A case is being filed under the Digital Security Act.

Dinosaurs travelled across oceans!



CNN ONLINE

Fossils of a duckbill dinosaur have been discovered in Africa, leading experts to believe the species once traveled hundreds of kilometers across oceans to reach the continent.

The new dinosaur, Afnabia odyseus, a member of the plant-eating duckbill dinosaur family, was discovered in rocks in a mine in Morocco, dating back some 66 million years to the end of the Cretaceous period.

Though some duckbill dinosaurs could reach up to 15 meters (49 feet) long, experts say that Afnabia was comparatively tiny, measuring the size of a pony at three meters (10 feet).

Experts were puzzled at how the dinosaur ended up in Africa, which was an island continent and completely isolated by deep sea during the Late Cretaceous.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Birangana Parul Rani laid to rest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Birangana Parul Rani died of old-age complications at her house in Barguna's Patharghata upazila town on Thursday night. She was 90.

She left behind two sons and two daughters. Her husband, Manohar Mistry, was a martyred freedom fighter and son Manmath Ranjan Mistry is a freedom fighter.

The upazila administration completed the burial with state honours at 10:00am yesterday.

Patharghata Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sabrina Sultana, Patharghata Police Station Officer-in-charge Shahabuddin and MA Khaleq, deputy commander of Upazila Muktijoddha

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Gang-rape victim raped again in Lalmonirhat

STAR REPORT

A schoolgirl, who was allegedly gang-raped about a month ago, was raped again in Lalmonirhat on Wednesday.

In Noakhali, police on Thursday night arrested a man over the attempted gang rape of his former wife.

Police said the 16-year-old schoolgirl from Kaunia upazila of Rangpur recently went to visit her sister in Keratari village of Lalmonirhat's Patgram upazila.

She was staying alone at her sister's house on Wednesday afternoon. At

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 7
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:55 12:45 4:00 5:30 7:15
JAMAT 5:30 1:15 4:15 5:34 7:45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



A woman learns self-defence techniques from an instructor during a training session at MA Aziz Stadium in Chattogram city. A platform named Inspire Chattogram arranges the training for women in the port city twice a week at the stadium and Halisahar BDR Math. So far, 417 women have registered for the training programme called Self-defence Survival Art. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Covid cases hit new record in US

Over 120,000 infections recorded in last 24 hrs; Italian regions enter lockdown

AFP, Washington

Coronavirus cases hit new records in the United States as swathes of Italy returned to lockdown yesterday with the resurgent pandemic continuing its march through Europe.

The US recorded a third day in a row with deaths above 1,000, while more than 120,000 infections were reported -- smashing a daily record set the day before, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

More than 9.6 million people have been infected and 234,000 have died in the United States so far during the pandemic, by far the highest tolls globally.

The figures comes as US President Donald Trump, who survived a bout with Covid-19 in October and insists the virus will "disappear," was fighting for his political life with vote-counting from Tuesday's presidential election still ongoing.

In Europe, the World Health Organization's regional director Hans Kluge said Covid-19 was surging on the continent as its 11.6 infections put it above Latin America and the Caribbean's 11.4 million.

"We do see an explosion... in the sense it only takes a couple of days to have over the European region an increase of one million cases," he told AFP.

Countries across the continent are imposing new lockdowns, with Greeks facing stay-at-home orders from Saturday.

Experts say Italy is already in the grip of a second wave,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1