



GREEN 'REVOLUTION'
UK PM to ban petrol, diesel cars from 2030
SEE PAGE 6

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

www.thedailystar.net

Your Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXX No. 297

AGRAHAYAN 4, 1427 BS

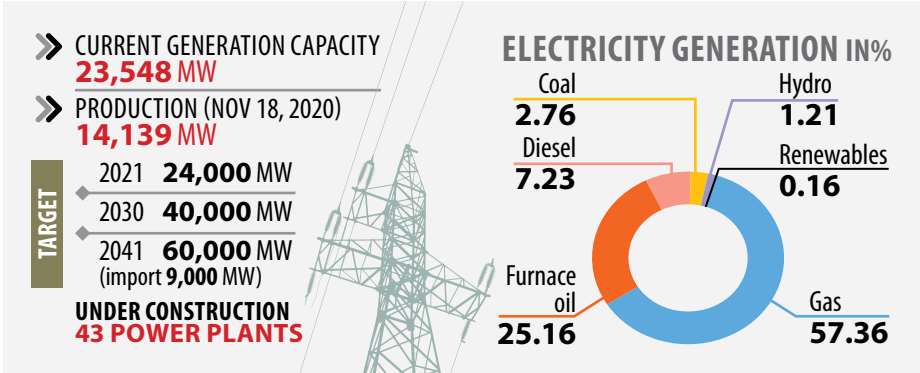
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Future not coal power

Govt plans to strike off 13 coal-based power projects, looking for cleaner alternatives; Rampal still on



PINAKI ROY
Coal-fired power projects are on the chopping block as the government finally plans to give up its obsession for the dirty energy over rising coal import costs and environmental concerns. The power, energy and mineral resources ministry has already finalised the plan and will soon send it to the Prime Minister's Office, with a proposal for shifting to liquefied natural gas (LNG) and petroleum for electricity generation. If the plan gets the final go-ahead from the highest office, all but five projects will

be scrapped, confirmed sources at the ministry. The government has approved 18 coal-based power plants since 2008 as part of its aggressive plan for generating 40,000MW power -- 35 percent of it from coal -- by 2030. Years went by, but 13 of the projects could not make any progress or ensure funds to construct the proposed plants. "Some companies could not secure the funds after getting the approval. So, we are considering it [shutting them down] as they are taking too much time to start



The authorities have ordered social distancing and other restrictions ahead of winter to avert a possible second wave of the coronavirus outbreak. But the rules remain on paper while people buy goods from vendors on this footbridge near New Market in the capital. Thankfully though, most of them have some kind of face coverings.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Over 2K Covid cases for 3rd straight day

2,111 infected, 21 die in a day
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities reported over 2,000 new Covid-19 cases for the third straight day yesterday, raising concerns over the possible second wave of the Covid-19 outbreak in the winter. The number of daily reported cases remained around the 1,500-mark for the previous two months. In 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, 2,111 people tested positive for the virus, said a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services. With this, the number of confirmed cases in the country rose to 4,38,795. Against a total of 16,469 tests in 115 labs in the same 24 hours, the positivity rate was 12.82 percent, which is lower than the previous day's 13.83 percent. According to experts, the daily positivity rate is one of the important parameters to measure the transmission level of the virus. If the positivity rate remains below

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PM again warns of second wave

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said that though the intensity of Covid-19 pandemic has declined slightly in the country, it is likely to increase in the coming winter. She was replying to lawmakers' queries in parliament yesterday during the question-answer session of the PM. She sounded the warning in reference to opinions expressed by experts. Her scripted answers were tabled in the House, with Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury in the chair. Replying to a query from ruling Awami League MP Didarul Alam, Hasina said the global epidemic has been successfully tackled in Bangladesh so far with the government's visionary leadership, timely decisions and efficient management. "Although the intensity of the Covid-19 pandemic in Bangladesh has decreased slightly at this moment, experts have opined that it may increase again in the coming winter. A second wave of the pandemic has already started in Europe and America," the premier said. Noting that extensive preparations have been taken to deal with a possible second wave of the virus in the country, the PM said the government has instructed the authorities concerned to implement "no mask, no service" policy to contain the spread of novel coronavirus in the coming winter. "Screening continues at the points of entry to the country. Staying in quarantine for 14 days has been made mandatory for the returnees from abroad. Activities are being carried out according to the action plan adopted for preventing and checking Covid-19."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



No charges except for tuition fees amid Covid

Govt asks all pvt secondary schools
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has asked all non-government secondary schools not to collect re-admission, development, assignment, tiffin, laboratory, library, and magazine fees from students during Covid-19 pandemic. In a circular, the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), yesterday also said school authorities should adjust the amounts with monthly tuition fees if they had taken it already. If the Covid-19 situation does not improve by the beginning of 2021, schools will not be allowed to collect the fees from students, the circular read.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

CASES OVER BUS TORCHING He was in hospital, still made accused

Claims Jubo Dal leader; a heart surgery patient among accused
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

When buses were being torched in Dhaka on November 12 afternoon, Zakir Hossain Siddiqui, a vice-president of Jubo Dal, was undergoing treatment for a blood disease at LabAid Hospital. The 50-year-old was in cabin-430 between November 10 and November 15, and had paid Tk 88,163 in medical care charges. The Daily Star obtained documents in support of this claim. However, according to a case filed by Paltan police, Zakir torched a bus on November 12 and he is accused No-3 in the case. Zakir yesterday appeared before a High Court bench along with 119 other BNP leaders and activists, including Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, to seek anticipatory bail in cases filed over the arson attacks on buses. The court granted them bail until January 5. While talking to The Daily Star, Zakir alleged that four fingers of his right hand were broken after police attacked him and other BNP and pro-BNP activists during a BNP workers' conference in Nabinagar of Brahmanbaria on October 23.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

PROTHOM ALO EDITOR Noted citizens concerned over charge framing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eighteen eminent citizens yesterday expressed concern that a court framed charges against five people, including Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman, in a case filed over the tragic death of college student Naimul Abrar. Following is the full text of the statement given by the noted citizens: Recently, Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court framed charges against five persons including its [Prothom Alo] Editor and Publisher Matiur Rahman in a case filed over the tragic death of Dhaka Residential Model School and College student Naimul Abrar. Framing of charges in the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

PVT PRACTICE IN OFFICE HRS Govt doctors to face action

Decides health ministry's taskforce; govt to fix fees for pvt healthcare services
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government doctors providing private services during work hours will face action, the health ministry said yesterday. The decision came at a meeting of the ministry's taskforce committee on Tuesday, said a press release. "The taskforce requests [people] to inform its members if any government doctors are found providing private service during office hours. We will take action," Dr Shibbir Ahmed Osmani, member secretary of the committee, told The Daily Star. The public will be informed later about the process in which they can officially report such anomalies, he added. On February 9, the High Court issued a rule asking the government officials concerned to explain why the section of the law that allows state-appointed doctors to conduct private medical practice beyond their office hours should not be declared unconstitutional. The law being referred to is the Medical Practice and Private Clinics and Laboratories (Regulation) Ordinance, 1982.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Women labourers wait for work with their shovels at Savar City Centre. Begum, right, says she finds work only about 10-15 days a month and attributes her reduced income to the economic slump caused by the coronavirus restrictions. The photo was taken on Tuesday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Outrage over MP's rape comments

Rights activists deeply concerned that his words went without protest at JS
NILIMA JAHAN and RASHIDUL HASAN

Human rights activists and feminists expressed grave concern over the words of independent MP of Bogura-7 Md Rezaul Karim Bablu, who said in parliament on Tuesday that feminists are to blame for the rape incidents across the country. Bablu even resorted to comparing women to tamarinds in line with the late Amir of Hafajat-e-Islam Allama Shafi's words in 2013. While passing the Women and Children Repression Prevention (Amendment) Bill, 2020 -- which added the provision of death penalty for rapists -- several MPs proposed circulating the bill to elicit public opinion and sending it to a select committee. MP Bablu said, "In the name of women's liberation, feminists are continuing to expose women. This has increased the acceptability of rape so much among rapists that they are encouraged to commit the act," he said. Referring to Shafi's words in 2013, comparing women to tamarinds, Bablu also said, "If the tamarind theory of Allama Shafi could have been applied, the rapists would be discouraged from rape..."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Drug addict kills wife for money

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A housewife was killed by her drug addicted husband allegedly for money in Joypurhat Sadar upazila on Tuesday.

Being informed by the villagers, police recovered the body of Monika Rani Mohanta, 26, wife of Anukul Chandra Mohanta of Belamla village, and sent it to Joypurhat Modern Hospital for autopsy.

Culprit Anukul, however, fled the house with his five-year-old son, keeping Monika's body lying on the floor.

Locals said Anukul, a carpenter and son of Horen Chandra, often used to torture his wife for money since their marriage about eight years ago.

On Tuesday night, Anukul demanded money from Monika to buy drugs, but as she refused to give the money he beat her mercilessly and strangled her to death before fleeing the scene.

Villagers spotted Monika's body yesterday morning and informed the police.

Two years into building, nursing institute not opened

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Two years into construction of a nursing institute in the district town, it is yet to become operational, thanks to the negligence of the authorities concerned.

The Public Works Department (PWD) is not handing over the three-storey building due to lack of power and water supply, sources said.

The health ministry and Diabetic Association of Bangladesh in 2013 took a joint project to build the 200-seated nursing institute at a cost of Tk 17.97 crore. It is a public private partnership (PPP) project.

The government has funded Tk 14.29 crore while the rest of the amount was funded by Pabna Diabetic Association for construction of the nursing institute.

It was scheduled to complete construction work of the three-storey building in 2018. It ended in December the same year.

On January 15 in 2014, the Public Works Department issued work order to the contractor for construction of the nursing institute in Pabna Diabetic Association.

Later, Zinnat Ali Zinna construction firm got the work order.

According to the district health department and Pabna Diabetic Association, although construction of the nursing institute was completed in 2018, the building is still awaiting its



The nursing institute in Pabna town is yet to be opened, two years into building.

finishing touch. So, the institute is yet to be opened. Construction of the three-storey building

ended within the scheduled time but the PWD did not hand over the building in the last two years as the finishing touches

on the building are yet to be completed, said Md Baby Islam, president of Pabna Diabetic Association.

As electric and power supply lines to the building are yet to be connected, the PWD cannot hand over it, he said.

Meanwhile, the colour and decoration of the newly-built building are being damaged due to lack of maintenance, Baby Islam said.

The PWD has extended the time for the project till June, 2019 but they did not complete the work within the time. Later, the deadline for completion of the construction work was extended till June this year but one percent of the finishing touches on the building is yet to be completed.

Due to the negligence of the authority, the nursing institute is yet to become operational, said Baby Islam, adding that recently, a letter has been sent to the ministry of health, letting it know about the slow progress of the construction work.

Pabna PWD Executive Engineer Anwarul Azim said the work of electrical wiring and water supply to the building is yet to be completed. They are expecting to finish the work very soon.

They are expecting to hand over the newly-constructed building to Pabna Diabetic Association within this year, he said.

Missing baby found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

The body of a 17-day-old girl child, who was stolen from her house allegedly by one of her neighbours early Monday, was found floating in a pond in Moreganj upazila of the district yesterday.

The victim, Sohana Akhter, was daughter of Sujan Khan of Gabtala village in the upazila.

Local people found Sanjida's body floating in a pond nearby her house in the morning and informed the police, Officer in Charge (OC) of Moreganj Police Station Mohammad Monirul Islam said, adding that they recovered the body and sent it to the hospital for autopsy.

Earlier, after having their meal on Sunday night the girl's parents went to sleep with the baby.

They woke up early Monday and found the baby girl missing from the bed.

Sujan alleged that his daughter might have been abducted and killed as a sequel to a conflict over land disputes with his neighbours.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Bank recruitment exam. Includes logo, title 'বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক', and detailed instructions in Bengali regarding the exam process, eligibility, and application form.

Volunteers step in to end misery

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Over the last four years, the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) officials visited the two-kilometre dirt road -- in Shukurullahgaon village of Kamalganj upazila -- and took measurements three times, but did not repair it.

Fed up, the villagers finally took matters in their own hands and straightened out the road that is used daily by thousands in 10 villages of two neighbouring unions.

During a visit on November 14, at least 30 volunteers from Shukurullahgaon village were seen mending the road with whatever tools they had available. Some were bringing in dirt, while others were packing the dirt into large and small potholes that surfaced all over the road.

Sanjeeb Das, a retired teacher from the village said, thousands of residents in Adampur and Madhabpur unions have been suffering immensely as the Ghoramara-Shukurullahgaon road had been left unmaintained for four years.

The road was supposed to be paved a long while ago, but that did not happen either, he said frustratingly.

The impassable road not only became risky for children and the elderly, but it also had been affecting the local economy, said a number of villagers whose livelihoods mainly depend on agriculture.

Without a proper road, the farmers in the villages had been counting losses as they could not ensure timely delivery of their agricultural goods and produce to nearby markets, they added.

The makeshift repair work on the dirt road will last only till the next monsoon and the authorities should take immediate steps to pave it before the monsoon arrives, the villagers



A few of the villagers, young and old, who joined hands to repair the two-kilometre-long dirt road in Shukurullahgaon village of Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

demanding. One of the volunteers, Miraj Miah, said after seeing promises made by the authorities broken over the years, "we decided to carry out the repair work by ourselves."

"The dilapidated road has been a major cause for concern and we had our hopes up when the local UP chairman visited our area. But they broke all their promises too," said villager Anil Singha.

Babul Kumar Singh, a member of Madhabpur Union Parishad (UP), said after they informed LGED officials in Moulvibazar about the poor condition of the road, they came and took measurements of it three times over the past four years, but did not take any step to pave the

road. UP Chairman Pushpa Kumar Kanu said they asked the authorities to pave the Ghoramara-Shukurullahgaon road as well as other rundown roads in the union, but necessary funding was not available for the task.

When contacted, Deputy Assistant Engineer Mamun Bhuiyan of LGED in Kamalganj upazila said the Ghoramara-Shukurullahgaon road is the most important road in Adampur and Madhabpur unions.

Praising the villagers' efforts, he also said under a project proposal sent to the ministry, they included the name of the road in a list of roads that need to be repaired the upazila, but sufficient fund was yet to be available for it, he added.

He was in hospital, still made accused

FROM PAGE 1

He said he had been getting treatment from LabAid since then but he had to get admitted on November 10 as his condition deteriorated due to blood-related problems.

"I was astonished to see my name in the bus-torching case. How could I torch a bus when I am so sick and having treatment in a hospital," Zakir, a resident of city's Malibagh area, said over phone.

Asked about Zakir's claim of being in hospital during the incident, SI Shaheen Mia of Paltan Police Station, who filed one of the 16 cases, said he will not talk about the matter then. Zakir is not the only one though.

Nazmul Alam Nazu, Rangpur district Jubo Dal president and joint general secretary of Jubo Dal central committee, claimed that he was also falsely accused.

He said he had a bypass surgery at a hospital in Dhaka on October 13 and had been on bed rest, as prescribed by doctors.

"I am on three months' complete bed rest as per doctor's suggestion after the surgery. Yet, I have been made an accused in a bus torching case filed with Motijheel police," he said over the phone.

Nazmul said he left Dhaka for

Rangpur on November 14 in an ambulance and could not return to Dhaka to seek bail.

He has been accused in two cases. Following the arson attacks on nine buses on November 12, 16 cases were filed against more than 500 identified leaders and activists of BNP, its affiliate bodies, and unidentified others.

Police claimed that the buses were torched by the accused at the directive of their central leaders with an aim to foil the Dhaka-18 by-polls held that day.

The charges include attempted murder by torching buses, sabotage attempt, exploding bombs, and possessing explosives. ARSONISTS STILL AT LARGE Police are yet to arrest anyone directly involved in the torching of buses.

They have, however, arrested around 50 people, mostly BNP and its front organisations' leaders and activists. The arrestees were quizzed on remand but police could not glean any information about the real arsonists, sources said.

A CCTV video clip found after an arson attack showed two young men throwing something inside a parked bus at Paltan causing a fire inside the vehicle in the blink of an eye.

The duo fled the scene quickly. The charges include attempted murder by torching buses, sabotage attempt, exploding bombs, and possessing explosives. ARSONISTS STILL AT LARGE Police are yet to arrest anyone directly involved in the torching of buses.

Paltn police and different other intelligence agencies have been scrutinising the video to identify them.

"We have been trying to identify the arsonists from the footage, but are yet to succeed," Abu Bakar Siddique, officer-in-charge (OC) of Paltan Police Station said yesterday.

A top official of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, however, said they have already identified the two in the video and drives were on to arrest them.

OC Abu Bakar said they arrested 11 people in the case filed with his police station and have quizzed some of them on remand. They were yet to get any information on the arsonists, he said, adding that they were hopeful getting information soon.

This newspaper also talked to the OCs of city's Uttara Purba, Airport, Bangshal, and Bhatara police stations. They too said they were yet to arrest anyone who was directly involved in setting the buses on fire.

Bangshal OC Shaheen Fakir on Tuesday said they arrested 16 people in a case filed over an arson attack on a bus. Some of the accused had been interrogated on remand, he added.

"We have gleaned some information but cannot disclose those as the investigation is going on," he said.

BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

Reclaiming Historical Spaces through Fiction

With a touch of whimsy, 'The Adventures of China Iron' rewrites a historical narrative and renders spaces inclusive.

ISHRAT JAHAN

The Adventures of China Iron by Gabriela Cabezón Cámara (Charco Press, 2019) begins in the poor encampments of a village in 19th century Argentina, with the protagonist marvelling at the hope and light she finds in the sight of a puppy playing in some dirt.

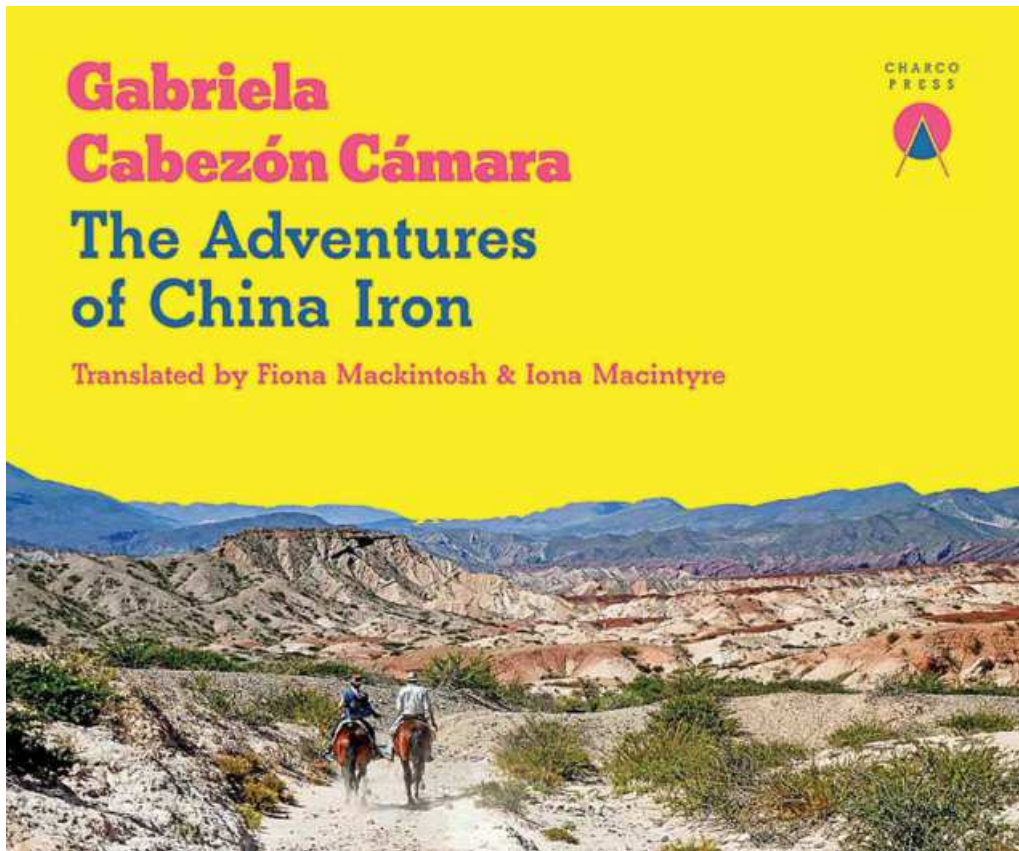
The 14-year-old narrator does not have a name; she answers to "La China"—pronounced Chee-na—a Quechua word that translates to "someone's woman." As an orphan China was raised by abusive parents in the slums. They eventually sold her off to one Martín Fierro with whom she bore two children. After her husband is (forcefully) conscripted by the Argentinian Army, China is left alone to navigate a life for herself. She discovers joy and freedom in this solitude, an experience that others around her perceive as misfortune.

As she settles into the novelty of her freedom, China meets Elizabeth, a Scottish woman left alone in their village because her husband, too, was mistakenly picked up by the Army. Liz shares that she will be journeying in search of him far into the frontier and indigenous territory. China sets off with her on impulse, taking along the puppy whom she has lovingly named Estreya (translating to "The Star"). It is Liz who first gives La China the dignity of a name, La China Josefina Fierro: China Josephine Iron. And together they set off across the Argentinian pampas, juxtaposed against a nation being adopted into the British colonial project.

China narrates her story in three parts and one can sense her voice mature as she learns about herself and the world. Her narration is conversational, with a childlike sense of wonder both for the beautiful skies and grasslands, as well as the unforgiving landscapes "pearled with bones" across the pampas. "No longer flat, it heaved with grain, tents, Indians on the move, white women escaping from captivity, horses swimming with their gaucho riders still astride, while all around the dorado fish darted like lightning into the depths, into the middle of the bursting river. It didn't seem real to witness such a thing, to see the whole world being dragged along, slowly spiralling, muddy and dizzying, a hundred leagues away to the sea," she writes.

First published in Spanish in 2017, the book was translated into English by Fiona Mackintosh and Iona Macintyre in 2019, shortlisted for the International Man Booker Prize 2020. This translation does the characters and their voices justice, weaving in local terms to stay true to the original and providing sufficient guidance for a reader unfamiliar with Spanish.

China's voice—and Camara's skill as a writer—are strongest when speaking of brutal and systemic injustices through ordinary events of their excursion. An example of this is how the British Empire's nation building ideologies



overshadow Liz's budding relation with her. Liz speaks of the wonders which Britain has discovered: tea illustrates India, whisky, her native land; French craftsmanship in skill petticoats and gowns; Chinese paddy field and its curly roofed pagodas. Liz populates China's perspective with her own, in which the British Empire is at the top (quite literally, in her notion of the world map), controlling and navigating the fates of far off countries. While China is enraptured in her evolving feelings for Liz, she questions, albeit naively, the notion that the glorious Argentinian pampas should form the dull bottom half of that world.

Through this story, Cámara upends the epic tales of Argentinian resistance, which were predominantly narrated through the male gaze of "macho men corralling with the natives and cultivating the vast grasslands." China's story is placed on top of José Hernández's 1872 epic poem "El Gaucho Martín Fierro" (The Gaucho Martín Iron), which carries heavy national significance in Argentina, having established gauchos—skilled brave horsemen who roamed the peripheries of Argentinian and Uruguayan land and law—as a symbol for the fight against corruption and pro-European sympathies.

But Cámara does more than draw inspiration. She reinvents the classic tale. From the margins of *El Gaucho's* single-voiced narrative, she brings to centre stage the wives left behind and the

indigenous communities. This shifts not only the centre of Hernández's epic poem, but also the narratives of political struggle, colonial agenda, and nationalist sentiments created in and cemented into literature.

In Hernández's poem, Fierro's wife and her struggles are condensed into the following verse: "When she hadn't a single copper left, And of husband and sons she was bereft/ If she wasn't to stay and starve to death, What else could the poor thing do?"

Cámara shows "the possibilities Fierro's 'poor wife'" navigates for herself amidst the trauma and turbulence of national and personal power struggles. If one has read *El Gaucho, The Adventures of China Iron* will reveal the blind spots in the epic poem. But China's tale stands on its own merits as a feminist queer romance, a coming-of-age story that critiques an enduring patriarchal, capitalist world order. There are no boundaries between imperialist agenda and national resistance inside China and Liz's travelling wagon. Despite its short length, the book is an immersive lesson that the personal and political are forever in flux in all our realities. In fiction it manages to become what we expect our realities to be—honest and inclusive.

Ishrat Jahan is an early stage researcher who writes in her free time. Reach her at ishrat.jahan1620@gmail.com.

BOOK REVIEW: NON-FICTION

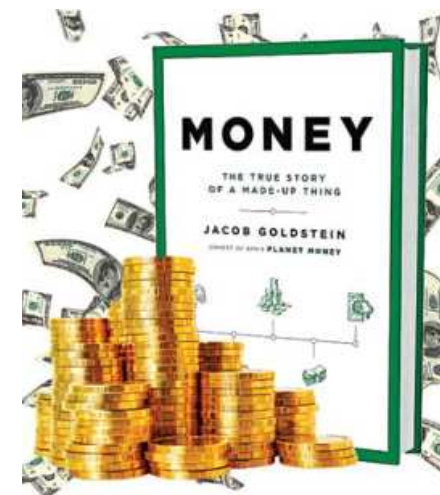
Money Still Makes the World Go Round

ASRAR CHOWDHURY

Jacob Goldstein, author of *Money: The True Story of a Made-Up Thing* (Hachette Books, 2020), and the co-host of the radio podcast, *Planet Money* of npr.org, isn't an economist. He completed a Master's in creative writing from Concordia University. He slowly found his way reporting on stock markets during the financial crash of 2008. That is when he started asking the question: what is money?

A few weeks after the 2008 financial crash, Goldstein had dinner with his Aunt Janet, a business graduate who was a poet in her younger days. "Money is fiction. It was never there in the first place." Aunt Janet's response to the financial crash was the eureka moment for Goldstein. Twelve years later, Goldstein narrates a story of the history of money.

The book is based on two central and recurring themes. First, that money is a 'shared fiction'. We all accept it and value it. "Otherwise, it's just a chunk of metal, or a piece of paper, or... a number stored on a bank's computers". Second, the history of money hasn't been linear. Out of necessity, or due to some unexpected accident, money has changed form over time.



DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

Before money, people exchanged through barter. Barter works well in communities where members are aware of each other's needs, and where everybody has the necessary skills to produce what others need.

With the formation of cities in Mesopotamia, a 'shared fiction' of a medium of exchange was needed. This is where the story begins with Babylonians using clay tokens as an accepted medium of exchange to clear

debts. Goldstein sets the stage in Greece, where coins and metal money took off.

As he seeks to find how money changed over time, Goldstein dramatizes events and explores how they influenced societies.

Paper money was invented in China by a merchant in Sichuan around 995 AD. This freed people from carrying and storing heavy metal coins. The effect was explosive. By the 13th century, China became the most prosperous country in the world.

However, hyperinflation during the Ming dynasty led to China reverting back to metal coins. China became the 'sleeping giant' Napoleon was to 'coin' centuries later.

The Mongols introduced paper money to run their empire and facilitate trade. All of a sudden, paper money became 'shared fiction' for different cultures and regions. This had an explosive effect on trade and what would today be termed as 'globalisation'.

Goldstein then jumps directly to renaissance Europe, bypassing the Arabs. He delves into the historical events that lead to the creation of stock markets, central banks, and Europe's adoption of paper money.

The Great Depression of the 1930s was a turning point. Roosevelt took the US off the Gold Standard. Whether by accident or by design, the US Dollar slowly became the global legal tender after World War II.

Goldstein shows how panic during the 2008 crash led to the collapse of a financial system. States ended up bailing out big corporations. Looking into the future, Goldstein finishes the book with bitcoin, and modern monetary theory.

Goldstein's exploration of history bears traits of Ibn Khaldun's *Al Muqaddimah*. It looks at history objectively. His 'shared fiction' hypothesis rings bells of Yuval Harari's *Sapiens* in its ability to accept and believe 'shared myths'. Once the trust of the 'shared fiction' of money breaks, societies find a new 'shared fiction'.

Books on economic history should be written like this. Whatever one's back ground, Goldstein has an uncanny ability to blend facts with humour and wit, leaving the reader to pause, think, and move on.

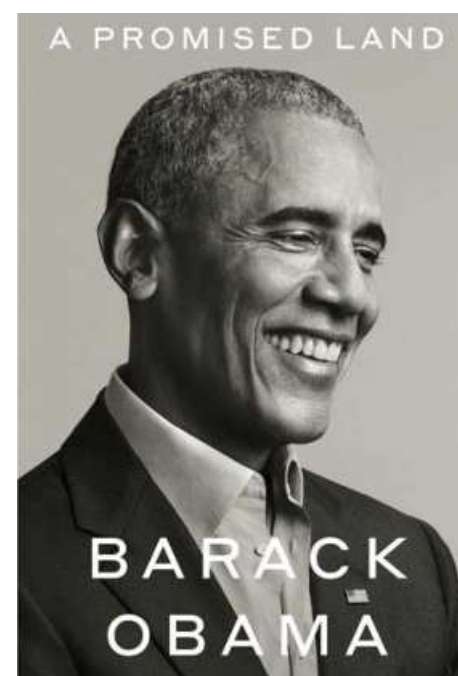
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THE SHELF

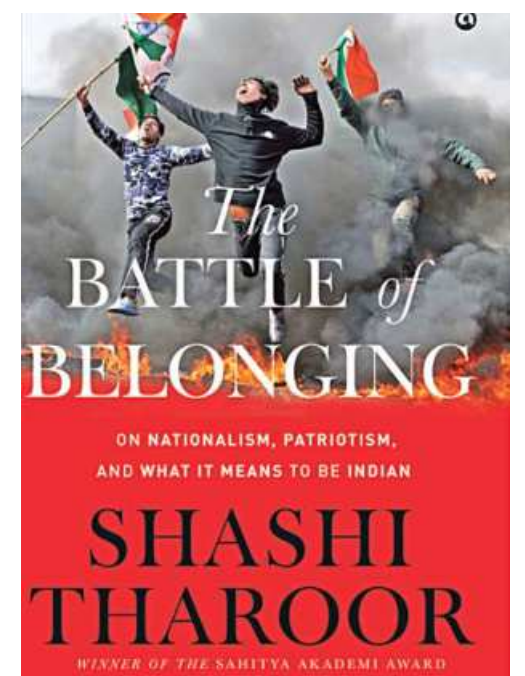
5 NEW NON-FICTION RELEASES TO LOOK OUT FOR THIS MONTH

STAR BOOKS DESK

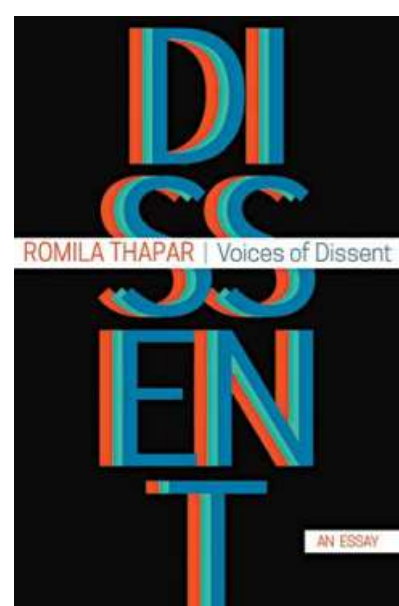
Autumn means a harvest of new books the world over. While novels and short stories continue to sweep through shelves, this past month has brought about an especially exciting basket of non-fiction releases, covering history, politics, reportage, and literature. Stay tuned for Daily Star Books' reviews and interviews on some of these new books in the coming weeks! Read more about each book on the online version of this article.



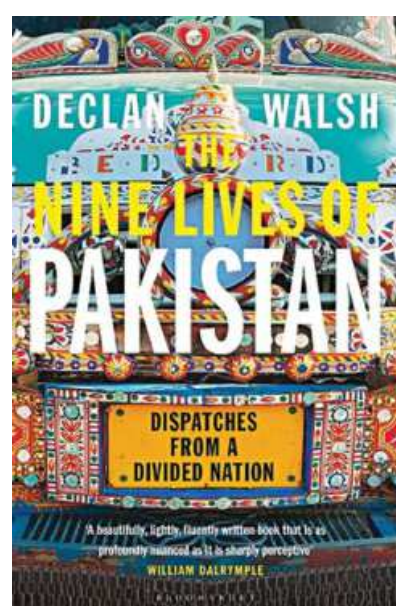
A PROMISED LAND
Barack Obama



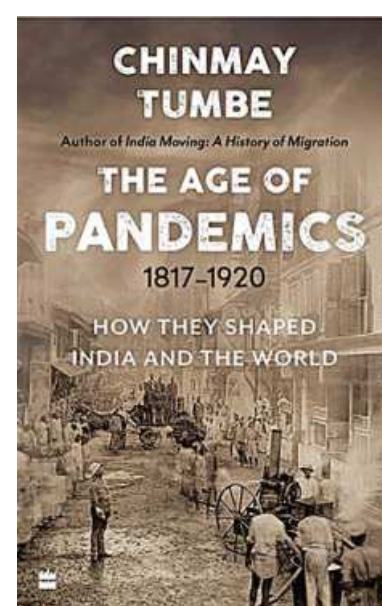
THE BATTLE OF BELONGING
Shashi Tharoor



VOICES OF DISSSENT
Romila Thapar



THE NINE LIVES OF PAKISTAN
Declan Walsh



THE AGE OF PANDEMICS (1817-1920)
Chinmay Tumble



HUMAYUN KE NIYE
Hasan Shawon



ILLUSTRATION: NAFIA JAHAN MONNI

THE BOOK REPORT On Children's Literature in Bangladesh: Then and Now

RASHA JAMEEL

For World Children's Day on Friday, November 20, Daily Star Books speaks to contemporary and veteran authors, publishers, and readers of children's literature written in Bangladesh.

Read the article online on The Daily Star website, and on fb.com/DailyStarBooks, [@thedailystarbooks](https://twitter.com/thedailystarbooks) on Instagram, and [@DailyStarBooks](https://twitter.com/DailyStarBooks) on Twitter.

Crisis of opportunities feeds Bangladesh's human trafficking problem

A CLOSER LOOK



TASNEEM TAYEB

WE all aspire to "a better future". While the idea of a better future and what it entails varies from people to people, dreamer to dreamer, what remains constant is the aspiration. It is in search of this future that hundreds and

various factors. For the affluent, the prospect of better education, better standards of living, and better facilities are the determinant factors. For those living on the fringes of society, the causes are much more diverse and desperate. Even if we narrow down the causes to the socio-economic triggers, four key areas come to the fore.

"If we look at the profile of the people who are migrating, we'll see that they are basically the youth," said noted economist

education or training or employment. Which means, there is a lack of opportunity both in terms of employment and skills development. So there is a big void there, a crisis of opportunities facing the youth. And this crisis presents a big existential threat for them, leading them to migrate out of desperation."

The second bundle of factors, according to Rahman, relates to the overall governance environment and governance or political norms in the country. "The party-affiliation-

but they are helpless against the reality that, here, merit is not appropriately rewarded nor are rules followed."

And the third factor is the deteriorating employment elasticity of growth. Dr Rahman referred to the statistics of Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES)—a nationally representative survey used to measure monetary poverty that is conducted every five years—which suggests that between 2010 and 2016, the overall employment elasticity of growth has gone down. It means that one percent growth in 2016 could not generate as many employment opportunities as it did in 2010. And this has also exacerbated the desperation of the jobless. With Covid-19 taking a toll on the nation's economy and pushing people out of jobs, people now have become even more vulnerable to the lures of clandestine trafficking rackets.

In addition to these, women's lack of access to education and skills development opportunities is another factor that leads to their migration abroad. Most of the women who are forced to go abroad take up menial jobs, for example as domestic help. In a report published last year, a local newspaper citing the data of the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) suggested that more than 8.4 lakh female workers went abroad since 1992; of them, 98 percent migrated to Middle Eastern countries as domestic help. And a good number of them fell victim to physical torture and abuse. Dead bodies of 473 women returned to Bangladesh between 2016 and September this year. Many of them had committed suicide.

Despite the increasing cases of abuse of our female migrant workers abroad and the risks of human trafficking, women and girls still take the risks out of desperation to support themselves and their families. The ones that are lucky find decent employment. The ones that are not fall prey to the traps set by traffickers, and are often sold into prostitution and servitude.

While talking to a local newspaper, Sumaiya Islam, executive director of Bangladesh Nari Sramik Kendra, suggested that education for migrant workers should be improved and the standard of their training should be enhanced to international standards to make work abroad safer for them.

Apart from this, child marriage (I wrote a column last year detailing how early marriage is making our girls more vulnerable to trafficking), social stigma, and lack of empowerment are added factors which make women and girls more prone to trafficking.

These social and economic factors must be rooted out, and only then can we eliminate the causes that enable human trafficking. While the academic and skills development curricula need to be made more comprehensive to empower the youth with knowledge and skills to earn a better living, the country's economic planners need to work on creating more sustainable employment opportunities at home to accommodate the job needs of people—boys and girls, men and women. Such job opportunities must be available to everyone, not just those who are associated with the politically influential. The ministries of women and children affairs, education and social welfare can work together to promote education for girls, eliminate child marriage and remove the social barriers women face in their search for livelihood opportunities.

It is through these initiatives that some of the key economic and social triggers of human trafficking can be eliminated. We also need to ensure that individuals seeking employment abroad go through formal channels to avoid being exploited by trafficking rings. Addressing these will not end the problem of human trafficking in its entirety—human trafficking is, after all, made up of a much more complex set of factors. But it is certainly a good place to start.

Tasneem Tayeb is a columnist for *The Daily Star*. Her Twitter handle is: @TayebTasneem



Many migrants seeking better employment opportunities abroad fall victim to human trafficking.

PHOTO: IOM/FRANCESCO MALVOLTA

thousands of people seek jobs abroad every year from Bangladesh. And it is this dream that human traffickers exploit to entrap people in the guise of labour migration to profitable work destinations.

According to a report published on the website of Ovivashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP), an average of around 590,000 people migrate out of Bangladesh every year seeking better employment opportunities abroad. And many of them fall victim to human trafficking. These individuals are often forced into bonded labour, sex slavery, domestic servitude, or are exploited for organ trafficking. In an extreme and alarmingly increasing trend, the victims of trafficking are also often held hostage in foreign lands while their families are forced to pay for their release. Mass graves of Bangladeshi and Rohingya nationals found in Malaysia and Thailand are a tragic reminder of the grim fate our people encounter at the hands of ruthless traffickers.

While the government has taken various measures to curb human trafficking—such as enacting the Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act 2012, setting up seven special tribunals to fast-track trial of human trafficking cases, and cracking down on individuals and agencies involved in smuggling and trafficking—these measures are mostly focused on addressing the symptoms rather than the causes that are forcing people to migrate for a better life.

People's decision to migrate is aided by

and chairperson of Brac, Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, while discussing this issue at length with this writer. "It's not the older group. It's the youth who are going abroad in search of livelihood. It's a youth desperation issue," he said. And why is that? "There might be particular family-specific reasons. But as a group, there are two bundles of factors at work for them. One is the prospect of finding productive employment within the country. According to official statistics, within the age group of 15-29—which we call the youth segment—nearly 30 percent is not in

based local government elections that we now see have served to destroy the social fabric of villages. Earlier, despite the political competition, there used to be a kind of a social environment that was maintained, which is not there now. Before, political conflict was confined to the higher level. Now a kind of an oppressive political environment has trickled down to the very base of the society, including in the villages. In this kind of environment, most of the youth who are desperate feel powerless while trying to find opportunities. These young people are willing to work hard

UAE and Israeli settlers find common ground in Jerusalem



JAMES M DORSEY

WEAKENED by Joe Biden's electoral defeat of US President Donald J. Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu risks being caught between a rock and a hard place as Jordan, the Palestine Authority and the

Jordanian-Palestinian control of the Haram ash-Sharif and counter Turkish efforts to stoke Palestinian nationalist and religious sentiment. The settlers and the far-right are calling for internationalisation of the administration of the Haram ash-Sharif, which plays into the UAE's hands.

"Ironically, it may be the case that calls for just such an arrangement may come from Muslim citizens of countries that have normalised their ties with Israel and find it offensive that a small group of Palestinians are attempting to ban them from visiting one of their holiest sites," said Josiah Rotenberg, a member of the Board of Governors of the Middle East Forum, a Philadelphia-based right-wing think tank.

The UAE's recognition of Israel and willingness to engage not only with businesses located in Israel's pre-1967 borders but also those headquartered in Israeli settlements on the occupied West Bank and invest in a technology park in East Jerusalem have fuelled a war of words with the Palestinians and sparked incidents with Emirati visitors to the Haram ash-Sharif.

"Most of the citizens of Israel, myself included, continue to... demand that Prime Minister Netanyahu apply full sovereignty to Judea and Samaria," said settlement leader Yossi Dagan after heading a settlers' delegation on a visit to Dubai to discuss business opportunities. Mr Dagan was using the biblical name of the West Bank.

The visit reinforced Palestinian assertions that the creation of diplomatic ties between Israel and Arab states prior to a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would reinforce Israeli occupation rather than open the door to the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

The "Israeli-Emirati deal raises the concern and fear within the Jordanian Awqaf and among Palestinians, because it aims to give the UAE a new role inside Al-Aqsa," said former Palestinian minister of Jerusalem affairs Khaled



Jordan, the Palestine Authority and the UAE manoeuvre for control of what is to Jews the Temple Mount and to Muslims the Haram ash-Sharif, the third most holy site in Islam.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS/AMMAR AWAD

Abu Arafah, referring to the Supreme Muslim Council.

Muhammad Hussein, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, didn't need Mr Dagan's statement to come to that conclusion. Resigning in protest from an Emirati clerical group established to project the UAE as a beacon of moderate Islam immediately after the announcement of UAE-Israel relations, Mr Hussein banned Muslims from the Emirates from visiting and praying at the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

An Emirati business delegation visiting Israel last month was verbally assaulted and told to go home by Palestinian worshippers when they went to pray at the mosque. Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh scolded the Emiratis, saying that "one ought to enter the gates of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque by way of its owners, rather than

through the gates of the occupation."

Responding on Twitter, Laith al-Awadhi, an Emirati national, retorted: "We will visit Al-Aqsa because it does not belong to you, it belongs to all Muslims." Saudi lawyer and writer Abdel Rahman al-Lahim chipped in arguing that "it is very important for the Emiratis and Bahrainis to discuss with Israel ways of liberating Al-Aqsa Mosque from Palestinian thugs in order to protect visitors from Palestinian thuggery."

Mr Abbas, the Palestinian president, has slowed down a reconciliation between his Fatah movement and Hamas, the Islamist group that controls the Gaza Strip, in anticipation of a more empathetic policy by an incoming Biden administration. He broke off relations with the United States after Mr Trump produced an Israeli-Palestinian peace plan that

endorsed annexation, recognised Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and cut off funding for the Palestinians.

Palestinian officials suspect the UAE, backed by Israel, of positioning Mohammed Dahlan, an Abu Dhabi-based former Palestinian security chief with close ties to Emirati Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed as well as US officials, as a potential successor to Mr Abbas.

Mr Abbas could be disappointed by the degree to which a Biden administration may reverse Mr Trump's policy and find that it may not oppose broadening the administration of the Haram ash-Sharif.

In an interview with *The Times of Israel*, Antony "Tony" Blinken, Mr Biden's top foreign policy advisor and a former senior official under President Barack Obama, signalled that Mr Biden would, in contrast to Mr Trump, oppose Israeli efforts to annex parts of the West Bank and could adopt a more critical attitude towards expansion of existing Israeli settlements. It would likely be a position endorsed by the UAE despite the Emirates' engagement with the settlers.

Mr Blinken insisted that a two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the "only way to ensure Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state and also to fulfil the Palestinian right to a state of their own." With both Israel and the Palestinians "far from a place where they're ready to engage on negotiations or final status talks", he said that a Biden administration would seek to ensure that "neither side takes additional unilateral steps that make the prospect of two states even more distant or closing it entirely."

The Biden administration could well see broadening of the governance of Haram ash-Sharif as one way of achieving that goal.

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.

QUOTABLE Quote

JEAN RACINE
(1639-1699)
French dramatic poet and historiographer.

There are no secrets that time does not reveal.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Musical Horn
- 5 Kids
- 11 Eye part
- 12 Maintenance
- 13 Sty group
- 14 To the core
- 15 "Die Winterreise" composer
- 17 Uno plus due
- 18 Took steps
- 22 "Ghosts" playwright
- 24 English county
- 25 Catch some z's
- 26 Collins base
- 27 Weather map line
- 30 Sore spots
- 32 Mink's cousin

DOWN

- 1 Gloss targets
- 2 Idle on film
- 3 Cabaret
- 4 Quell concerns
- 5 Law of the movies
- 6 Verdi works
- 7 Quick drawing
- 8 Cool, to jazzmen
- 9 Twisty fish
- 10 Mole, e.g.
- 16 Writer Jonson
- 19 Predicament
- 20 Niagara's source
- 21 Retreats
- 22 Scoop
- 23 Homer's boy
- 28 Make void
- 29 Secret meetings
- 30 Writer Beattie
- 31 Port settings
- 35 Irrelevant
- 36 Bike part
- 37 Cease
- 38 Swelled head
- 39 Pot part
- 40 Okra unit

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

BEETLE BAILEY

BEETLE BAILEY, THE LAZIEST CHARACTER IN THE COMICS...

...WAS CREATED BY ONE OF THE MOST PROLIFIC CARTOONISTS OF ALL TIME

915 MORT WALKER

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

RAMP SQUALL
ARAB AUSSIE
ZIPPS GOESTO
ZAP GETS
MORASE TAB
ADOS STALE
YOUTH EXPOSE
ART EERIE
FACADE YOKE
AWAKEN EURO
REVERT STAN

BABY BLUES

BY MORT WALKER

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

VEGETABLES, LIVER, AND SOME WEIRD, SLIMY STUFF I BOUGHT ON SALE LAST MONTH.

THIS WAY THEY'LL BE THRILLED WHEN THEY SEE WE'RE REALLY JUST HAVING LEFTOVERS.

GRAPE VINE



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Ahmed risvy for Noble's 'Ovinoy'

Lyricist Ahmed Risvy once again came to the spotlight after writing the lyrics for Noble's new song, *Ovinoy*, which was given tune to by Ahmmed Humayun. Ahmed Risvy has written a lot of renowned songs over the years, including *Tumi Jodi Bolo* by Kumar Bishwajit and *Prithibir Sob Sukh* by Dolly Shantoni, among many others. Risvy said, "I have been writing lyrics for over twenty-five years now, and I have seen a lot of change in music throughout the years. With my lyrics, I have been trying to adapt to these changes."

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub



Popular singer Sania Sultana Liza recently released a new song, *Bhabna*. Besides singing, the song's lyrics, tune and music composition is done by Hridoy Khan. Regarding the song Liza said, "*Bhabna* has a different feel to it. I believe the audience will appreciate the song. This is the first time I am working with Hridoy Khan. I really enjoyed working for the project." The song has been released on Hridoy Khan's official YouTube channel.



Jaya Filming During the Pandemic

Throughout her career, actor Jaya Ahsan has been seen playing the roles of many different kinds of characters. She has made each character unique and gained a lot of popularity in the process. Now, she will be seen playing a widow in the film *Nakshi Kathar Jamin*, which is being directed by Akram Khan. She started shooting for it on the 8th of November. She revealed that the film is being planned to release on the 16th of December, 2021 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's victory day. The film is based on the novel *Bidhobader Kotha*, by Hasan Azizul Haque. Aside from this, Jaya has also been shooting for an untitled film by Piplu R Khan since this September, which has already been completed.

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

COVER STORY

JILL OF ALL TRADES

Versatile media personality and 'The Ekushey Padak' awardee Sara Zaker began her journey into the world of acting with 'Nagorik Natya Sampradaya' in 1973. After that, the actor took on several other roles which includes being an entrepreneur, director and counsellor. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, Sara Zaker talks about her life, theatre and her time during this pandemic.

Rafi Hossain: Welcome to *Uncensored* with Rafi Hossain. Today, we have with us actor, entrepreneur, director and counsellor, Sara Zaker. Thank you for being with us today.
Sara Zaker: Thank you for having me.

Rafi Hossain: I first want to say that I really love your name, 'Chixie'. Who gave you that name?
Sara Zaker: My mother actually gave me that name. It might sound modern and catchy, but at this age, I am not sure if it matches my personality. My mother wanted to name her first daughter Chinku, but since her first child was a son, she named him Chinku. That was my brother who we lost in the war of 1971. Later, she had another son, my brother, who was named Picho by my dada. He had a small nose and was named after Pinocchio, meaning that it would grow bigger if he lied. When I was born, as my mother had originally wanted to name me Chinku, she found a similar alternative, and named me Chixie. My close friends call me Chixie, and formally people refer to me as Sara.

Rafi Hossain: Some people find you intimidating. How do you feel about that?
Sara Zaker: While a little intimidation is needed in some situations, I generally feel upset when someone is scared of me. The colour of my eyes often makes people think that I'm angry, which is something I noticed even when I was young. People perceive me as rather closed-off, which I am not. However, it did give me a different personality and image.

Rafi Hossain: How did you get into acting?
Sara Zaker: Both my parents were supportive, and they never forced us to pursue any activity. My dad played a bigger role in me getting into acting, however. My elder brother was a big fanatic of movies, shows, and theatre. He even used to act in English at his university sometimes. He performed at the British Council stage, Bangladesh Mohila Samity stage and so on. He had big dreams about acting. I had an interest in acting, and this, perhaps, influenced me further. Additionally, I studied at an English Medium school and had a Western outlook. So, an uncle of mine told my dad to get me into Nagorik Natya Sampradaya to learn and participate in Bangla theatre as it would help me get more accustomed to the Bangla culture and language. That is how I got into acting. Aly Zaker had really inspired me as well.

Rafi Hossain: How did your relationship begin with Aly Zaker?
Sara Zaker: I believe he liked me first, and gave a proposal. I accepted his proposal after thinking things through, and I realised that it would also help me continue pursuing my acting. My father, however, did not accept the proposal readily. He met with him, and visited his house to see how he lived his life. But, in the end, it all worked out well.

Rafi Hossain: Could you share more about the Liberation War Museum that you founded?
Sara Zaker: I started as a founder and trustee. Since I was so emotionally attached to the history, it did not feel like something grand to me. Now, I'm the Secretary General, and I have more responsibilities. The team we have now are very efficient and the trustees are extremely supportive. Tariq bhui, who we lost, was also a trustee and helped tremendously during the foundation of the museum. People ask me how I am running so many establishments even during this pandemic and with personal struggles at home. However, I believe that without work, I would fall apart, as it gives me a sense of purpose.

Rafi Hossain: How did you get involved with the advertising agencies?
Sara Zaker: My husband had suggested it first. I had finished my masters, and was interested in working for a travel agency. He mentioned an advertising agency, but I disregarded it as frivolous. He then asked if I would join a research organization they had. I agreed to it as I was good at English, and I thought I would be able to write the reports well. However, I did not take into consideration that I neither had a statistics or economics background. That was perhaps one of the times I had to struggle and learn. I only went into communications after I had established the organisation strongly. This would be a brief history of my career.

Rafi Hossain: How did you balance everything in

your life?
Sara Zaker: I took advantage of the opportunities that came to me. I wish, however, that I had known I would pursue acting as a career and worked even harder when I was young, like my son Iresh does. Many individuals identify themselves as an actor, but I have taken part in many kinds of activities and sectors. I would say that I am a jack of all trades, but a master of none. However, I do not have any regret, as I did everything with devotion. I took part in a play, *Shot Manusher Khoje*, which was later televised. I had to make a decision back then as I had to choose between television, my studies, or my children. That is how I almost had twenty-five years of hiatus from acting on television. Later, when I went into television, I realised that I was confident, but the audience did not know me and so, did not accept me as well as the other actors. Acting in Humayun Ahmed's play later helped me gain more recognition.
Rafi Hossain: Your fans often say that you hold a strong position in theatre, rather than television. Why is that?
Sara Zaker: I am more associated with the theatre stage than television. I feel more confident and can hold the stage in theatre plays, but I don't feel the same when I'm doing a show for television. I believe that is because of the practice I have had, and my deep involvement with the theatre compared to television.



Rafi Hossain: Who would you say are co-actors that you feel comfortable working with?
Sara Zaker: I was always blessed to have great co-actors by my side. I always enjoyed working with Aly Zaker, Asaduzzaman Noor, Abul Hayat, Juboraj, Suborna and so on. They are all extremely talented actors. Similarly, when I worked alongside amateur actors, like in Catherine and Tareque Masud's movies, I had the luck to work alongside many new but skilled actors as well.

Rafi Hossain: How did you prevent your work from interfering or affecting your personal life?
Sara Zaker: I believe it was my upbringing. Growing up, we were not wealthy and often had to struggle financially. So, when our careers began to take-off, we valued the money we earned. We never took it for granted, and that is how we prevented the issue in our professional life from affecting our personal ones.

Rafi Hossain: What are your views on the state of the industry today?
Sara Zaker: There are many serious actors nowadays. However, in the show business, I believe that a lack of proper critiques and reviews is leading to the downfall of the industry as it is crucial in the

industry. We are losing audience from theatre and plays because of this as well.

Rafi Hossain: How do you feel about the new individuals in the industry?
Sara Zaker: Working in communications and in a multi-media platform has given me an insight into the changes that have been made recently. Despite our general view on the industry today, there are many new and talented individuals. I even downloaded *TikTok* and watch Youtubers and see influencers to understand how they work and what they aim to create. From there, I realised that many of them have fresh and unique ideas, and can connect with the audience. This world that is new and different to us must also be paid attention to if we want to create content today.

Rafi Hossain: Whose films, since the last decade, did you think were outstanding?
Sara Zaker: I really liked the films by Hridi Haq, Shuvashish, younger people like Haider and so on. I really like the directions they take. There are certainly many good films around. But, I think people don't focus on a lot of these individually because there is a lot of content in the market.

Rafi Hossain: Before the pandemic, did you regularly visit the theatre to watch new local films?
Sara Zaker: Yes, definitely. I used to go very frequently. Sometimes, I would even go alone because I really like watching new films, especially ones made by the youth of Bangladesh. This is why I have been very supportive of them as I think they don't get enough support from the general public.

Rafi Hossain: Can you name some younger actors and actresses that you think have a lot of potential in the film industry?
Sara Zaker: I can't think of many names right now but a few people that come to mind are people like Haider, Jaya and Abrar who I believe take their work very seriously.

Rafi Hossain: What are your thoughts on the type of content we find online, now that people are more gravitated towards these due to the pandemic?
Sara Zaker: I feel that video content is the most popular compared to written and other types of content, especially on platforms like Facebook and TikTok.

Rafi Hossain: How important do you think it is to grasp the attention of viewers in the least amount of time possible?
Sara Zaker: It is definitely very important. We always see how articles and videos with interesting headlines and buzzwords get the most attention. People think that there will be something to learn from by clicking on those. In my personal experience I have noticed some interviewers ask very personal questions in order to extract more information.

Rafi Hossain: Do you think this is an appropriate practice for hosts? And do you think all viewers would willingly watch such interviews?
Sara Zaker: No, I don't think every viewer would want to watch these. And it is rather inappropriate for hosts, especially since the media usually focuses on the personal lives of younger female celebrities before thinking as these comments can often come off as degrading.

Rafi Hossain: Do you think this encourages people to behave more misogynistically, especially considering the rising rape cases in Bangladesh? How do you think we should speak out against rape culture?
Sara Zaker: I believe that some men use rape or encourage rape culture on social media as a show of power, in order to silence an entire sex. It is almost as if they are trying to start a war within the country against women by shifting the blame to them. Many of these men get off the hook too easily. There should be appropriate laws established against such actions and we should certainly show a zero-tolerance policy towards it. While we cannot make such huge changes overnight, I do believe if enough people spoke out unanimously, we could make these changes much faster.

Rafi Hossain: Thank you for being with us today. It was a pleasure talking to you.
Sara Zaker: Thank you for having me.

Shreya Shomoyeeta

POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

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

DASH & LILY

Dash & Lily is a rom-com TV series on Netflix, first aired on November 10, 2020. It was created by Joe Tracz, produced by Karl Frankfield under the banners of 21 Laps Entertainment, *Boy Detective Inc.* and *Image 32*, and stars Austin Abrams, Midori Francis and Dante Brown, among others. The storyline, which is based on *Dash & Lily's Book of Dares* by Rachel Cohn & David Levithan, follows the unexpected romance between polar opposites Dash and Lily, as they trade notebooks all across New York City.



Dracula Sir

Dracula Sir is a Bangla horror-thriller film, following the life of a teacher with prominent canines, who discovers that he has stark resemblances with Count Dracula. It was written and directed by Debaloy Bhattacharya and Kallol Lahiri, produced by Shrikant Mohata and Mahendra Soni under the banner of *Shree Venkatesh Films*, and stars Anirban Bhattacharya, Mimi Chakraborty and Bidipta Chakraborty, among others. The film was released on October 21, 2020 in theatres.



A TEACHER



A Teacher is a drama series, created by Hannah Fidell, who also directed the show along with Gillian Robespierre and Andrew Neel, produced under the banners of *Aggregate Films*, *Hola Fidel* and *EXP*, distributed by 20th Television, and stars Kate Mara, Nick Robinson and Ashley Zukerman, among others. The plot, which is based on the eponymous film, follows the illicit relationship between a young teacher at a high school and her student. It was aired on November 10, 2020 on FX on Hulu.

Amina Hossain

Introducing
BSRM Xtreme
B500 DWR
 the tough steel

MATARBARI POWER PLANT
 Cox's Bazar
PROUD CONSTRUCTION PARTNER
SHAH CEMENT

Watch on drug rehab centres stepped up

5 shut in city; psychiatrists observe one-day work stoppage to protest NIMH registrar's arrest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) yesterday closed five drug rehabilitation centres in the capital as those were running without licence.

The move comes days after the death of senior ASP Anisul Karim at Mind Aid Psychiatry and De-Addiction Hospital in the city's Adabor area.

Several teams raided the illegal centres in Doyaganj, Sanir Akhra, Mohammadpur and Mirpur areas and shut down their operations, DNC Director General Muhammed Ahsanul Jabbar told The Daily Star.

He said the DNC beefed up vigilance after the police officer was allegedly beaten to death inside the private rehabilitation centre by its staffers on November 9.

The DNC DG also said there were about 350 licensed rehab centres across the country, including 105 in the capital. "There is no scope to convert rehab facilities into psychiatric treatment facilities without permission, which was done by Mind Aid," he added.

During yesterday's drives, a team from the DNC's north division sealed off Hira Rehabilitation Centre in Mirpur-2 and Diner Alo Rehabilitation Centre in Mohammadpur. DNC officials said the centres had applied for licences but were yet to get them. They also did not have enough psychiatrists and support staffers, including ward boys.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



People crossing the Dhaka-Aricha highway near Abdullahpur, paying scarcely any attention to an advancing truck, which has to make way for the pedestrians rather than the other way round. This photo was taken on Tuesday morning.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

SIPHONING OFF MONEY Govt officials outnumber politicians

FM says citing initial info on 28 cases in Canada

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said he was surprised to see the number of government officials who siphoned off money and sent the amounts to Toronto, Canada, outnumbering politicians.

"It was an initial information. We have to verify it," he told reporters referring to information the government has about 28 cases.

Of the 28 cases, only four are linked to politicians while the rest to government officials and a few businesspeople.

"I thought that the number of politicians would be higher. I was surprised, though the information is not comprehensive," said the minister.

Momen was talking to reporters at an interaction session with Dhaka

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Europe sees first dip in Covid-19 cases in months

Says WHO; Pfizer/BioNTech say results show Covid vaccine 95% effective

AGENCIES

The number of new Covid-19 cases declined last week for the first time in over three months, but deaths in the region continued to climb, WHO data showed yesterday.

In total, nearly four million cases of the novel coronavirus were registered worldwide during the week ending Sunday, and almost 60,000 people died from the disease during the same period, the World Health Organization said.

Europe, which on Tuesday saw its total number of coronavirus infections climb past 15 million, remained the hardest-hit region.

Last week it accounted for 46 percent of the new global cases and 49 percent of the deaths, the UN health agency's weekly epidemiological update showed.

With 1.84 million new cases registered, the caseload across the region remained staggeringly high, but WHO noted that "in the past week, for the first time in over three months, the region observed a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

'Stop arms race'



November 19, 1972
SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU'S CALL FOR LASTING WORLD PEACE

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today calls upon peace-loving people of the world to strengthen the movement for world peace and made a fervent appeal to the big powers to stop the maddening arms race. The prime minister is confident that no power would be able to ignore the world opinion in favour of world peace. In this age one country could not subjugate or oppress another country for long, he adds. Bangabandhu is speaking at a reception accorded to him by the Bangladesh Awami League for his being awarded the Joliot-Curie peace medal.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



FIRE AT GRID SUBSTATION Power partly restored in Sylhet city after 31 hrs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

After almost 31 hours, power supply at many areas in Sylhet city started restoring from 6:10pm yesterday.

Most parts of Sylhet and some parts of Sunamganj districts plunged into darkness after a fire broke out at the 132/33 KV Sylhet Grid Substation in Kumargaon area of Sylhet around 11:00am Tuesday.

Juwel Rana, assistant engineer (sale and distribution) of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) in Sylhet, said, "After emergency repair work, we've started restoring power connection at different parts of the city and outskirts. As the damage is huge, it will take some time to restore all connection to normalcy".

Masnun Alam, sub-assistant engineer of Power

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Robot enforces mask-wearing, distancing at Japan store

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat



REUTERS, Tokyo

A robot has signed on as the newest staff member at a store in Japan, taking on the job of ensuring customers wear masks and practice social distancing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Robovie, developed by Kyoto-based Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute International (ATR), guides customers around the sales floor at the official store of soccer team Cerezo Osaka.

It warns customers when it detects through a camera and 3D laser beam technology that they are not wearing masks or abiding by social distancing rules.

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Schoolgirl raped in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A female student of class ten was raped in a village of Lalmonirhat's Kaliganj upazila yesterday morning, police said.

The alleged rapist, 27-year-old Mashiur Rahman from the upazila's Chandrapur village, was on the run till evening.

Quoting the victim, Arij Md Sajjad Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kaliganj Police Station, said the incident happened around 8:00am when the girl was returning

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PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 19

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
 AZAN 5:00 12:45 3:45 5:25 7:00
 JAMAAT 5:35 1:15 4:00 5:30 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Govt to buy 40 lakh MRPs for expatriate Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs yesterday approved a proposal to procure 40 lakh machine-readable passport (MRP) books to meet the immediate requirement of Bangladeshi expatriates.

The home ministry made the proposal before the committee so that Bangladeshis living abroad get the passports, as the government cannot give them e-passports due to the coronavirus pandemic across the globe.

Cabinet Division Additional Secretary Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal said the government's target is to give everyone e-passport.

"But we are going to buy 40 lakh MRPs due to the Covid-19 situation," he told this newspaper after the cabinet committee meeting was held virtually.

Contacted, Brig Gen Saïdur Rahman Khan, project director of e-passport, said for

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Children in Hatirjheel creating earthen toys, which they will leave out in the sun to dry before they can start playing with them. Amid the continuing closure of schools during the coronavirus pandemic, children across the country have had a lot of time to engage in recreational activities. This photo was taken around noon yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

REJECTION OF FRAUD CLAIMS Trump fires US election security chief

Judge skeptical of Trump bid to halt Biden win in Pennsylvania

AGENCIES

Donald Trump on Tuesday fired the US government's top election security official, who had rejected the president's unsubstantiated claims of "massive" fraud in the vote he lost to Joe Biden.

Trump announced on Twitter the termination "effective immediately" of Chris Krebs, who led the agency that jointly declared "the November 3rd election was the most secure in American history."

The US president, who refuses to acknowledge that he lost his bid for reelection to Democrat Biden, has repeatedly claimed without evidence that the voting and count were replete with fraud.

"The recent statement by Chris Krebs on the security of the 2020 Election was highly inaccurate, in that there were massive improprieties and fraud," he wrote in a tweet.

"Therefore, effective immediately, Chris Krebs has been terminated as Director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency."

Krebs, who reportedly told friends last week he expected to be removed, appeared to confirm it in a tweet on his personal account.

"Honored to serve. We did it right. Defend Today, Secure Tomorrow," he wrote.

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