



to lead the world.'

US PRESIDENT-ELECT

JOE BIDEN

electoral system by depriving people of their right to vote. The economy

is in a bad shape while banks and the share market got depleted."

BNP STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBER SELIMA RAHMAN

Farewell, magical Death of a man, not his legend MARADONA

AFP.Buenos Aires

Diego Maradona, one of the greatest footballers of all time, died Wednesday footballers of all time, died Wednesday at the age of 60, plunging his sport and Maradona was "arguably the greatest his native Argentina into mourning.

Renowned along with Pele as one of the greatest players ever to play the game, the Argentine World Cup-winning captain died of a heart attack, having undergone brain surgery earlier this month, a member of his entourage told AFP.

be known for his "Hand of God" goal against England in the 1986

when he appeared to use his hand to push the ball into the net before later swerving through the English defenders for a memorable second goal that sealed victory.

friend" and said he hoped they would "play together in the sky" one day.

Gary Lineker, who was in the England of all time" but made

a reference to that infamous goal by adding: "After a blessed but troubled life, hopefully he'll finally find some comfort in the hands of God. #RipDiego"

Argentine considered one of the world's greatest modern-day players, said Maradona was "eternal". Argentine President

School admissions

Applications to be taken online

repeat the same mistakes, relaxing too fast."

EU CHIEF URSULA VON DER LEYEN WARNS

EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Alberto Fernandez immediately announced

South American country. Shortly before the announcement that shocked the world, Argentine media reported Maradona had suffered a serious health setback on Wednesday

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

AL-AMIN As we were travelling to St Petersburg from Moscow by train while covering the 2018 World Cup in Russia, one inquisitive Argentine reporter asked why his country has such frenzied fan following in Bangladesh. The response was plain and simple.

It's because of Diego Maradona. Maradona is as popular in Bangladesh as he is in his own country. It will not be an overstatement to say that Bangladesh becomes the de facto home of Albiceleste come the

football World Cup every four years. Football transcends boundaries and as its biggest icon, Maradona the magician with a magnetic left foot, has carved a lasting place in the hearts and minds of crores of

Bangladesh fans, over

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

39 more die, 2,156 infected in 24 hours

UNB, Dhaka

The country saw a spike in daily Covid-19 deaths yesterday as the health authorities registered 39 deaths in 24 hours till 8:00am.

PROBABLE VACCINE RECIPIENTS

Frontliners to be first in line

First shipment from Gavi likely in Feb-June WASIM BIN HABIB and MOUDUD AHMMED SUJAN vaccine from Serum Institute of India via

Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd. With Bangladesh securing nearly 100 The officials said the government is 50 percent quota for local admission seekers at schools in

No collection of development, lab

School admission in the coming academic session will be based on lottery and the application process will be done online. The decision has been made to avoid

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

technical institutions would be held soon following the health guidelines.

Speaking on the school admission, the minister asked all non-government secondary schools not to collect development, laboratory, library, and

by lottery this time

the capital

and other fees expect tuition fees

Next year's SSC, HSC exams might be

possible." FORMER BRAZIL STAR ZICO Maradona will forever

World Cup quarter-final in Mexico, three days of national mourning in the

Pele said Maradona had been a "dear

"The best of the lot, no question... I saw Maradona do things



A total of 2,156 new infections and 2,302 recoveries were recorded during the 24-hour period.

With the latest count, the total tally of infection and death reached 454,146 and 6,487 respectively, said the Directorate General of Health Services.

The death and recovery rates stood at 1.43 percent and 81.29 percent respectively. So far, 369,179 Covid-19 patients have recovered.

Bangladesh reported its first novel coronavirus cases on March 8. The number SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

million doses of Covid vaccine from two sources by next year, the most pertinent question now is who will be vaccinated first. No decision has

been made yet but 5**0**5 frontline healthcare workers are the ones likely to be vaccinated first as the country expects to receive the first shipment

of vaccine doses from Gavi, the Vaccine and other Covid-related activities, Alliance, between February and June 2021, said officials of the health directorate.

Bangladesh will buy 68 million doses from Gavi under a global arrangement called COVAX facility and another 30 million doses of Oxford-AstraZeneca

for the vaccines. PRE-CLINICAL STAGE | 154 PHASE 1 TRIAL 21 PHASE 2 TRIAL 13 PHASE 3 TRIAL 10

Priority is likely to be given to the healthcare including nurses, management support workers, and technicians directly involved in treatment

workers

doctors,

health

and

developing National Vaccine Deployment

Plan determining the priority population

they mentioned.

THE VACCINE ROADMAP

Govt is now working on developing a National Vaccine Deployment Plan for Covid-19 and exploring different sources of vaccines.

This goes in line with the recommendations by the World Health This line with the Organisation and also the foundational principles of the COVAX collaboration, a SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

delayed

SSC grade will get more importance in giving HSC results

Pending NU, technical institutions exams soon following health guideline

Dipu Moni urges public universities to have combined admission tests

health risks amid the Covid-19 pandemic, Education Minister Dipu Moni said at a virtual press briefing yesterday.

She also said 50 percent quota, instead of the current 40 percent, would be reserved for students for admission to their local school in the capital. Besides, students in Dhaka will be able to select school from five under the cluster-based lottery system.

Dipu Moni hinted that the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSC) examinations next year could get delayed by a month or two. Besides, the results of this year's SSC tests would be given priority in deciding the results of this year's HSC examinations, which could not take place due to the pandemic.

The minister then assured that the pending final exams at the National University and

magazine fees from students while admitting them for the coming session. LOTTERY

Dipu Moni said they decided to complete the admission process through lottery following consultation with experts, head teachers at different schools and officials from the education and the primary and mass education ministries.

She hoped the admission process would be over by January 15. Details about the process, including the lottery system, would be disclosed on December 7.

Talking to The Daily Star, Prof Syed Golam Faruk, director general of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, also said admission to the primary section of secondary schools would be done through lottery.

Preparing for 2nd Wave O2 supply still not optimised

MOUDUD AHMMED SUJAN

Although hospitals across the country struggled during the first wave of Covid-19 transmission due to a lack of central oxygen supply, the authorities said they were still relying on cylinder-based oxygen supply.

As the rate of Covid-19 transmission is rising by the day again, giving credence to fears of a second wave, experts said the efforts to arrange proper hospital treatment for infected people must be completed immediately and there is no scope to repeat mistakes.

In a meeting with journalists yesterday, top officials of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), with Director General Prof ABM Khurshid Alam in the chair, talked about their preparations regarding the second wave.

Asked how many district level hospitals have centralised oxygen supply SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

GAVI, THE VACCINE ALLIANCE

Bangladesh will get 68 million doses of vaccines from Gavi for at least 20% of its population (34 million) within 2021. Each person will need 2 doses. Price of per dose estimated at \$1.60 to \$2.

SINOVAC

Bangladesh to conduct

in the country. It will cost

agrees to fund the trial,

Sinovac will supply the

vaccines. Double dose

\$11 and \$16.

vaccine may cost between

Russian Ministry of Health in August.

SANOFI/ GSK Two Bangladeshi institutes have stated their desire to host phase-III clinical trial

SERUM INSTITUTE, INDIA of Sanofi and GSK's protein 30 million doses of Oxford/ AstraZeneca vaccine will come from Serum Institute of India (SII) through Beximco Pharmaceuticals. This will cost \$5 per dose

including transportation cost. Tk 735.77 crore allocated to purchase vaccines from Serum.

China's Sinovac requested of vaccines. phase-III trial of its vaccine



based vaccine. **PFIZER** Govt wrote to Pfizer Inc. USA to secure their vaccine and technology transfer. However, this vaccine

RUSSIAN SPUTNIK-V

Govt is communicating with

Russia to get the Sputnik-V

vaccines approved by the

will require cold chain temperature of about -70 degree Celsius. Bangladesh has no cold chain capacity to ensure effective

management for this kind





Doctors, nurses, health workers and technicians who are directly involved in treatment and other Covid-19 related activities are set to get priority in vaccination plan.

WHEN TO GET THE VACCINE

First vaccine shipment is expected in Feb-June 2021 >> First 30 million doses to be

administered in 6 months (50 lakh doses per month) >> Total budget for this is Tk 317.8 crore

PHASE-II Another 10% of the population (1.72 crore) will be

vaccinated. **PHASE-III**

Next 20% of the population (3.45 crore) will be vaccinated, to be followed by another 40% (6.91 crore).

SAUDI LABOUR REFORM New initiative offers hope for migrants

IAMIL MAHMUE

As Saudi Arabia announced a new labour reform initiative to ease foreign workers' contractual restrictions, migrant rights activists and officials hope the move will improve the conditions of thousands of Bangladeshi workers in the oil-rich country.

The migrant workers, who are often subjected to various forms of abuse and exploitation, will be allowed to have more freedom in job mobility once the Labour Reform Initiative (LRI) comes into effect on March 14 next year, they said.

The reform initiative announced earlier this month would also lessen the restrictions on exit from and re-entry into the kingdom as it seeks to remove some elements of the "kafala" sponsorship system. The LRI would apply to all expatriates employed in the private sector.

The seven-decade-old "kafala" system ties migrant workers to one employer or sponsor, known as "kafeel", whose permission they need to change jobs, leave and reenter into the country -- which rights groups have been criticising as exploitative and a form of modern slavery.

"Most of the Bangladeshi migrant workers are expected to get the benefit since they are employed in the private sector," said Aminul Islam, labour welfare counsellor at the Bangladesh Consulate General in Jeddah.

"The initiative will be more fruitful in the migrant workers' immigration process," he told this newspaper over the phone.

Despite being legally eligible, Bangladeshi migrant SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3 FR Tower Extention Rupayan chief, 15 Rajuk officials responsible

ACC probe finds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rupayan Housing Chairman Liakat Ali Khan Mukul and 15 former and current Rajuk officials are among those responsible for the illegal vertical extension of FR Tower in Banani, according to investigators.

In its 15-month probe, the the Anti-Corruption Commission also found lessee of the tower Syed Md Hossain Imam Faruk and Managing Director of Quasem Industries Tasvir Ul Islam involved in the

corruption. On June 25, 2019, months after a fire broke out at FR Tower leaving 25 dead and 73 others injured, ACC Deputy Director Abu Bakkar Siddiqui filed a case. He was later appointed to nvestigate the case.

He has recently submitted the investigation report, which was approved by ACC yesterday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

13.82 CRORE PEOPLE **TO BE VACCINATED** PHASE-I

3% of the population (51.84 lakh) will be vaccinated, to be followed by another 7% (1.20 crore).

BANGLADESH UPDATE 2,156 New cases in 24hrs 4,54,146 Total cases

3,69,179 Recoveries

6,487 Deaths

Deaths

Three get death for rape, murder

MYANMAR ELECTIONS

Reschedule cancelled polls

Says Fortify Rights

immediately

age-appropriate

their parents.

as 2015.

Frontliners to be first in line

global effort to improve poorer WHAT EXPERTS SAY

Myanmar's citizenship law.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpu

A Shariatpur court yesterday sentenced three people to death for raping and killing of a housewife last year.

The convicts are Morshed Ukil, 56, of Madha Kodalpur village, Abdul Haque Mutait, 42, of Char Gharoa village, and Zakir Hossain, 33, of Daimi Charbhoira village, of the district's Gosairhat upazila.

Firoz Ahmed, public prosecutor of Shariatpur, said Judge Abdus Salam Khan of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal in Shariatpur delivered the verdict in presence of the convicts.

The court also fined Tk 50,000 each of them.

It also acquitted nine other accused of the case.

According to the case statement, Haowa Begum, 40, wife of Khokon Ukil of Charbhoira Ukilpara village, went appeal to the High Court against the missing after she went to a neighbour judgement.

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

discriminatory laws.

areas were "unsafe".

stable enough.

FROM PAGE 1

Fortify Rights.

Mvanmar

should

polls, Fortify Rights said yesterday.

schedule by-elections in areas where

the Union Election Commission

(UEC) cancelled the November 8

be ensured for all eligible persons,

including Rohingyas and others

who are disenfranchised under

held at the earliest opportunity in all

areas where they were suspended,"

said Ismail Wolff, regional director of

announced the cancellation of by-

polls in parts of 15 townships in Bago

Region, Kachin, Kayin [Karen], Mon,

Shan, and Rakhine states, saying the

in those areas when the situation is

to commit to a timeframe for the by-

elections or explain what conditions

would constitute as "stable enough."

It added that elections will be held

However, the commission has yet

Myanmar's ruling party, the

National League for Democracy

(NLD), claimed a landslide victory

in the November 8 elections, but

the authorities denied almost all

On October 16, the UEC

"Free and fair elections must be

It also said the right to vote must

house for charging her mobile phone on January 20 last year.

Following day, police found her body in an abandoned house of the same village and arrested Morshed after tracking the victim's mobile number.

Morshed later confessed to police that they killed Haowa and left her body there after raping her.

The victim's husband filed a case with Gosairhat Police Station.

After investigation, police submitted a charge sheet against nine people, including the three convicts.

On October 7 last year, a Shariatpur court framed charges against 12 people.

evidence, the judge found the three

satisfied with the verdict. They would

right to vote through the arbitrary

Rohingyas participated in the 2010

national election in Myanmar, and

three served in parliament as recently

That very year, the government

excluded Rohingyas from voting,

running for office, or maintaining any

Myanmar's continued denial of

Rohingya-led political party.

After examining witnesses and

guilty and convicted them. Shah Alam, the convicts' lawyer, told The Daily Star that they were not

In the ashes and charred remains of the shanties that were their home a day ago, people scavenge for anything that might be useful. A fire razed the shanties of Bihari community in the capital's Mohammadpur to the ground

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

need a competency-based education

Dipu Moni said making the lottery-

Some might link lottery with fate

.. But the lottery system might bring

"Under the current system, everybody

some positive changes in schools and

runs after some reputed schools for

admission and it allows the disparity

among schools to grow. The new move

Dipu Moni hinted that next year's

SSC and HSC examinations might be

delayed by a month or two. Usually,

SSC exams start on February 1 and the

HSC tests on April 1. She said the SSC students would be

evaluated on the basis of a curtailed

syllabus, ensuring that minimum competency is needed for promotion to

Due to the Covid-19, the government in October had announced that

examinees of this year's HSC and its

equivalent tests would be evaluated

based on their results of their Junior

School Certificate (JSC), SSC and their

get 75 percent weight to the HSC results,

while the JSC results 25 percent weight.

admission tests, the minister urged

all universities to follow the cluster

Regarding the public university

Dipu Moni said the SSC grades might

will help us close the gap," she said.

the education system," she said.

based admission system permanent

depended on the success of this year's

system.

model.

SSC AND HSC

the next level.

equivalent test grades.

School admissions by lottery this time

Rohingyas the

have anxiously been waiting for the start of school admission as public and private school authorities have not yet

schools begin the form distribution in December. But this year has been different as all schools have been closed since March 17 amid the pandemic.

Now, schools take fresh students for classes based on vacancy. But they

Meanwhile, the government decision improve the quality of education. You to admit students based on lottery has triggered mixed reactions among educationists.

Former Buet Prof M Kaykobad and Brac University Professor Emeritus and also founder-director of the private university's Institute of Educational Manzoor Development Ahmed welcomed the decision.

They said the government should make admission through lottery and expansion of the quota facilities for admission to local schools a permanent system.

Manzoor Ahmed said the government should work to create good schools in all areas by taking up plans on improving education quality.

"If there are good schools in our locality, parents will not run after some reputed schools elsewhere. It will also reduce traffic jam in the capital," he said.

Former director of Dhaka University's Institute of Education and Research and a member of the National Education Policy 2010 Formulation Committee, Prof Siddiqur Rahman said the lottery system was the right one for admission

"Children of this level will learn through fun and play ... but lottery for admission to upper classes might not be that good. The lottery system will allow students of all standard -- low, medium and high performing -- to sit in the same classroom. Teachers might find it difficult to deal with such a classroom which will be heterogenous in nature," he said.

"If you want to reduce the disparity admission system to lessen the financial between high-performing and lowburden on admission seekers and performing schools, you will need to reduce their hassles.

'IS bride' may not be 'continuing threat', UK court told

Y Total cases

1,422,921 • 60,518,725

AFP, London

A woman stripped of her UK citizenship after joining the Islamic State group in Syria may not pose an ongoing security risk to Britain, the Supreme Court was told on Tuesday.

Lawyers fighting for Shamima Begum's right to return to the UK to challenge the 2019 decision to revoke her citizenship said her case must be heard with the 21-year-old present.

"What security threat Ms Begum will pose... will inevitably depend on the circumstances of her case (and) an assessment of her, of the risk -- if any -- that she as an individual poses on her return," her lawyer David Pannick said.

Death of a man FROM PAGE 1

10,000 miles away from the great South American footballing nation.

When Maradona dribbled past four England players before rounding off Peter Shilton and scoring that poem of a goal in the Mexico 1986 World Cup, the whole world admired the genius with awe. That was also the moment Bangladesh football fans fell in love with Maradona, which only grew over the years.

The sight of thousands of Argentine flags in every nook and cranny of the country and the massive fan following that grew disproportionately compared with loyalties to other established football powerhouse... even Brazil fell behind in the wake of one Diego Maradona's mystique and magnificence.

So lasting is his aura and the belief he inspired that, during the 2018 World Cup, if 10 fans were seen in Argentina jerseys, the name of Maradona -- who last played for the Albiceleste in 1994 -- was seen on the back of more shirts than the current candidate for all-time great, Lionel Messi.

The greatest footballer on the planet never visited Bangladesh. There were occasions when our football authorities said there was a chance for the "football god" to make a brief visit to these shores. It did not happen.

Maradona is no more. The man died vesterday at the young age of 60, but his legend will live on as long as football lives. And his followers in Bangladesh will keep him close to their hearts as long as they live.

39 more die

FROM PAGE 1

of infection reached the 300,000mark on August 26. The first death was reported on March 18 and the death toll exceeded 6,000 on November 4.

Until now, 2,695,150 tests have been carried out, including 16,001

and discriminatory application of Global election monitor the Carter Center said the UEC rejected or detests or selling admission forms. registered 17 candidate nominations on the grounds of the applicants' "parents not holding Myanmar citizenship at the time of their birth".

Fortify Rights similarly documented the arbitrary rejection of Rohingya candidates based on false conclusions regarding the citizenship status of

health safety.

quota for schools located in Dhaka had been increased to 50 percent from 40 percent. And students willing to enroll in government schools in Dhaka will be able to choose five schools from each of three clusters. Currently, a student can choose a single school from each of

Tuesday afternoon.

enroll the bulk of students in class-1, at the beginning of students' academic life, and in class-6 after completion of

the country.

their results of Junior School Certificate (JSC) or Junior Dakhil Certificate (JDC)

Millions of students and their guardians

decided anything on holding entrance

Usually, private schools start selling the forms as early as mid-November. On the other hand, government

The school closure has recently been extended to December 19 to ensure

Dipu Moni said the "catchment"

three clusters.

to class-I.

primary education. Each year, several million students get fresh admission to schools across

Admission to class-1 takes place through lottery all over the country. Students get admitted to class-9 based on examinations. Students willing to enroll to other classes need to take admission tests. MIXED REACTIONS

the Rohingyas' right to vote or to participate in elections is part of its wider persecution of the indigenous ethnic group, including its ongoing denial of their existence, the rights

body said. Myanmar has long denied Rohingya access to citizenship, most recently through National Verification Cards, which effectively identifies members of the community as foreigners.

countries' access to vaccines.

The officials said that in the second phase, frontline professionals such as members of law enforcement agencies and journalists, and people aged above 60 with comorbidity are likely to receive the shots.

People aged under 18 may not be vaccinated in the first and second phases, hinted the officials.

The core committee on vaccine preparedness and deployment will submit the final draft of the plan on Covid vaccination to the health ministry in a day or two, Dr Shamsul Haque, director of Expanded Programme for Immunisation of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), told The Daily Star. VACCINES FROM GAVI, SERUM

Bangladesh will get 68 million doses of vaccine for at least 20 percent of its population (34 million) by next year from Gavi under COVAX facility, DGHS officials said at a press conference in the capital yesterday.

Each person will need two doses. The cost of each shot has been estimated at \$1.62 to \$2, they said.

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is an international organisation created in 2000 to improve access to new and underused vaccines for children living in the world's poorest countries.

The vaccine doses from Gavi are in addition to the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine doses that Bangladesh will procure from India's Serum Institute via Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

The health ministry on November 5 signed a tripartite contract with Serum and Beximco to import 30 million doses of the vaccine.

The officials said Bangladesh has to pay for the Gavi-COVAX vaccine under co-financing arrangement. And the health directorate will submit the National Vaccine Deployment Plan to Gavi as per the conditions.

At yesterday's press conference, Shamsul Haque said they are working to submit the final plan to Gavi on December 7 when the global vaccine alliance will start taking such plans from different countries.

Earlier, Bangladesh had sent an official Expression of Interest (EOI) to Gavi on July 9. Gavi sent a letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 18, announcing the country's eligibility for getting the Covid vaccine, he said.

DGHS officials said the first shipment of the vaccine doses is likely to arrive in the country between

Experts have lauded the government for ramping up its efforts to get Covid vaccines, but stressed the need for a prudent vaccine policy.

February and June 2021.

They urged the government to stay in touch with all other countries and organisations that are conducting the phase-III trial of vaccine development.

Prof Nazrul Islam, member of the National Technical Advisory Committee on Covid, said the government has made good progress in getting vaccines. However, there are lots of issues in vaccine deployment cold chain, necessary equipment, transportation and human resources. "Government officials are saying

they are prepared for vaccine deployment. We hope it is not a mere statement," he told this newspaper.

The noted virologist pointed to the previous "failures" in maintaining proper screening at airports and said, "If a new strain of the novel coronavirus enters the country and spreads, vaccination may not be sufficient to tackle it.

"We have to ensure stringent screening at airports. Also, it has to be made sure that people wear masks even after vaccination."

Prof Sayedur Rahman, chairman of pharmacology department at the BSMMU, appreciated the government initiatives to procure vaccines.

He, however, said concern remains as to "when the vaccines would reach the country and whether those could be administered to the people timely and properly."

OTHER VACCINES

The government may not procure the vaccine developed by Pfizer as it requires cold chain temperature of minus 70 degrees Celsius. Bangladesh does not have that cold chain capacity, said DGHS officials.

At yesterday's briefing, Shamsul Haque said the government has been in talks with Russia for Sputnik-V vaccine.

He further said two Bangladeshi institutes have expressed willingness to host the 3rd Phase Clinical trial of Sanofi and GSK's protein-based vaccines.

About the Oxford vaccine, he said Bangladesh will receive three crore doses -- 50 lakh doses a month -in phases by next year. Under the initiative, around 1.5 crore people will be vaccinated and each person will need two doses.

Prof Dr Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, director general (Health) of the DGHS, was also present at the briefing.

Farewell, magical Maradona

FROM PAGE 1 and was being treated at his home north of Buenos Aires.

"There are four ambulances at the door of the residence. They have summoned family members to come. It is serious," the TyC Sports channel reported.

The life of the divine footballing talent that was Diego Armando Maradona was marked by wild highs and lows, with Argentina and with club sides Boca Juniors, Barcelona and Napoli.

Excesses with cocaine and alcohol had long taken their toll on the mercurial talent's health.

The former player underwent surgery earlier this month to remove a clot lodged between his brain and skull.

Maradona has been admitted to hospital three times in the last 20 years for serious health issues --two of which were potentially fatal -- due to his drug and alcohol addictions.

The highs were crowned by his performances when he captained

New initiative offers

FROM PAGE 1

workers were earlier denied "final exit" permission by sponsors, and such workers could go to the Saudi labour court to settle the dispute, he added.

Migrant workers become eligible for final exit when the work contract ends.

Now, the new reforms will allow them "to leave the Kingdom after the end of the employment contract without the employer's consent", according to a Saudi Press Agency report.

On November 4, the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development launched the LRI under the "National Transformation Program" (NTP) to enhance the contractual relationship between workers and employers.

The re-entry reforms will allow without the employer's approval after submitting a request; the employer will be notified electronically of their departure.

The Saudi authorities made the

Argentina to victory in Mexico in 1986.

In the final, Maradona set up the 86th-minute winner against West Germany. He scored twice in the semifinal against Belgium, beating four defenders for the second.

But the match that defined his tournament, and possibly his international career, was that win over England, in which he scored two goals that will be remembered forever -- for very different reasons.

In the 51st minute, as England goalkeeper Peter Shilton reached to catch the ball, Maradona jumped alongside him and with a deftness that fooled the eye, flicked the ball with his hand through the England goalkeeper's arms and into the net.

After the game, Maradona said he scored "a little with the head of Maradona and a little with the hand of God."

The goal he scored four minutes later, when he picked up the ball in his own half and glided past six England players, including Shilton, was named

workers to travel outside Saudi Arabia

move amid criticism from global

who have long been demanding a drastic reform to the rigid nature of its "kafala" system.

The Gulf nation is the biggest overseas labour market for Bangladesh and also the top remittance-generating country. It is home to more than 22 lakh Bangladeshis, most of whom are employed in the private sector.

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, Bangladeshi migrant workers sent home around \$4 billion in remittance from Saudi Arabia, according to Bangladesh Bank data.

Migrant rights activists said the Bangladesh government should look at LRI implementation with due importance to protect the rights of Bangladeshi workers there.

Shariful Hasan, head of Brac Migration Programme, said the reform initiative is the inception of a positive move.

"I think Saudi Arabia has been undergoing a process which at the end of the day will benefit all migrants," he added.

He, however, said the government should see to what extent this initiative "Goal of the Century" by FIFA. He played for Argentinos Juniors

and Boca in Argentina before joining Barcelona in Spain, but it was in Naples where he would enchant an entire city by leading the then unfashionable club to its only two Italian league titles in 1987 and 1990.

"Always in our hearts. Ciao Diego," Napoli tweeted after his death was announced.

European football's governing body UEFA announced that Maradona would be honoured with a minute's silence before Wednesday's Champions League games.

In 2000, FIFA ran an online Player of the Century poll. Maradona gained 54 percent of the vote, Pele was second with 18 percent, but FIFA declared them joint winners.

Maradona married his long-time girlfriend Claudia Villafane in 1984. They had two daughters, Dalma and Gianinna, and divorced in 2004.

He also had a son, Diego Junior, born in Naples in 1986, although he only acknowledged paternity in 2004.

migration experts and rights defenders will be fruitful for Bangladeshi migrant workers.

Pointing out that many Bangladeshi workers are employed as housemaids and drivers in Saudi Arabia, Shariful said the Bangladesh government has to look into how these groups of migrant workers are benefited from the new reforms.

The Brac official said the government should also observe whether the reform initiative will uphold migrants' rights safeguarded by the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

It covers a migrant's right to movement, wage protection, and scope for sharing opinion, he added.

Shakirul Islam, chairperson of Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program, said the Saudi authorities seek to move from individual sponsorship to the "state-governed structural system" through this reform.

It should be implemented, he said, hoping the new reform will create more space for the protection of Bangladeshis migrant workers there.

during the 24-hour period, and 16.84 percent of the patients tested positive. Bangladesh is seeing 2666.64 infections, 2167.73 recoveries, and 38.09 deaths per million.

With the number of Covid-19 patients at different hospitals on the rise over the last few days, public health experts have urged the government to equip all hospitals and upazila health complexes with necessary equipment, including adequate oxygen-supply facilities, to ensure proper healthcare services to the infected people.

Rupayan chief FROM PAGE 1

'The ACC will soon submit the charge sheet before the court," said ACC Director Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya.

The fire broke out on March 27, 2019

In the investigation, the ACC found that although authorities had legally obtained permission for a 15-storey building, they made the FR Tower a 23-storey one over time. The FR Tower had no fire alarm, had narrow exit points and staircases, blocked fire exits and other issues. As a result, the casualties peaked, ACC found.

Faruque got the land on lease in 1989 from the now-defunct Dhaka Improvement Trust. He applied to Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha for permission to construct a 15-storey building on the land in 1990 and got approval the same year.

In 1996, permission was illegally given for extending the 15-storey ouilding to an 18-storey one. The building was later extended to the 23rd floor without any official clearance from Rajuk.

Rajuk officers helped create fake designs of the building and get approval for the illegal extension, the investigation officer found.

Rajuk officers who are found to be involved in the illegal extension are: Assistant Authorised Officer Nazrul Islam, Director Shamsul Alam, Deputy Director Muhammad Shawkat Ali, clerks Muhammd Mujibur Rahman Molla, Md Shafiullah and Saiful Alam, computer operator Md Enamul Haque, building inspectors Imrul Kabir, Shawkat Ali, former director Abdullah-Al-Baki, former authorized officer Shafiqul Islam, former assistant director Shah Md Sadrul Alam, former superintendents Jahanara Begum and Mofazzal Hossain, and former inspector Meheduzzaman.

Satrasta back to its old self

Late mayor Annisul's stellar work going to waste as trucks return to the thoroughfare HELEMUL ALAM

With trees and shrubs on the median strip thinning out and truckers parking vehicles on both sides of the road, Tejgaon-Satrasta is once again returning to its old self -- a troublesome thoroughfare for traffic.

Five years ago, late mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Annisul Huq turned the choked and almost unusable road into a functional one by removing an illegal truck stand, constructing wide pavements and planting trees on the median.

For decades, the illegal truck stand had occupied Satrasta (sevenway intersection) where trucks, pickups and covered vans would block both sides of the road. There was hardly any walkway.

In face of strong opposition from influential transport leaders, no one dared to remove the illegal stand. But things changed for the better after Annisul removed the stand despite coming under huge pressure.

The renovated Tejgaon-Satrasta road soon become an embodiment of the late mayor's tireless efforts to ease the city's unbearable traffic congestion.

But the road, named after Annisul Huq after his death in 2017, is now facing the same problem of traffic congestion due to absence of any visible action from authorities concerned for a sustainable parking solution that the late mayor had pledged.

"The road became useable again because of the initiative of mayor Annisul. But covered-vans and trucks now start occupying the road again from evening," said Md Ali Noyon, a trader at Farmgate.

During recent visits, this correspondent saw a lot of the shrubbery on the median strip of the 18-metre wide road has disappeared.

A part of the footpath at the northern side has been damaged while construction materials of an adjacent multi-storied building is being kept on the walkway.

Locals and some rickshawpullers said the number of trucks parked on the road increases at night.

During multiple visits at night, also occupied by trucks.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON, PRABIR DAS

Trucks, covered vans and pickups park in multiple rows on the Satrasta at night. During the day, the road is clear but adjacent roads become parking spots for heavy vehicles. The photos were taken recently.

this newspaper saw over 50 trucks and covered-vans parked on both sides of the road.

Mohammad Atik, a covered van driver of Nababganj Transport Agency, said they keep their vehicles on the road for convenience.

He said if they keep their trucks at the terminal then they have to wait till around 9am to leave the area due to other vehicles.

Not only that, all the three connecting roads -- the one in front of BG press staff quarter, behind central food depot and the one connecting Satrasta near the rail crossing to the northern side -- are

Record and Survey Department was also occupied with around hundred trucks and covered-vans. Some were

kept there for repairing works. "We cannot move around smoothly as the road in front of our quarter remains occupied by these vehicles round the clock," said Solaiman, a resident of Land Record and Survey Staff Quarter.

He said there was a plan to shift all the trucks but that did not happen due to lack of proper initiatives after the death of Annisul Huq.

randomly parked trucks and

said locals.

Iqbal Habib, joint secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, said when the Satrasta at Tejgaon was recovered, it was done conditionally. Annisul made a commitment that he will create a parking place in a planned way at some places beside the rail line and on land of railway and the central food depot,

said Habib, also an architect. But after the mayor's death, everyone seemed to have forgotten that, he said.

Habib said as the government The road is choked with has constructed warehouses at SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

THREE HOSPITALS' REFUSAL TO TREAT TWIN NEWBORNS

HC seeks opinion of four amici curae

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday sought expert opinions from four amici curiae (friends of court) on the alleged refusal of three hospitals in Dhaka to provide treatment to newborn twin babies and their death on November 2, and on the explanations given by the hospitals on the issue.

The amici curiae are Supreme Court lawyers ZI Khan Panna, Manzill Murshid and Dr Shahdeen Malik, and the chief pediatric specialist of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Ahmed Sohel asked for their expert opinions on this issue before this court on January 18 next year.

The bench passed the order after lawyers concerned of three hospitals -- Bangladesh Islami Bank Hospital, Dhaka Shishu Hospital and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) -- submitted their explanations to the court about their roles regarding treatment of the newborn twin babies.

Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Iddin Manik, who went through the explanations submitted to the HC on behalf of the three hospitals, told The Daily Star that Director of Dhaka Shishu Hospital Dr Syed Shafi Ahmed, Deputy Director Dr Prabir Kumar Sarker and peon Md Shamsul Haque have made contradictory statements in their explanations.

On November 2, the HC bench in a suo moto (voluntary) move sought explanations from authorities concerned of the three hospitals about the death of newborn twins, as the babies were refused treatment there, after Abdul Kalam Azad, father of the babies, brought the bodies of the babies to the court premises and placed the issue before the bench for necessary order.

Azad had gone to Islami Bank Hospital on a CNG-run auto-rickshaw with his pregnant wife Sayera Khatun on that day. She gave birth to the twins on her way to the hospital. Islami Bank Hospital refused to admit the babies saying they SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Fire guts 55 shanties, shops at Kalshi slum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 55 shanties and shops were gutted in a fire that broke out at a slum in Dhaka's Kalshi early yesterday

The fire originated around 2am at the slum in Baunia Beribandh. Twelve fire fighting units doused the blaze after four and a half hours of frantic efforts, Rasel Sikder, duty officer of Fire Service Headquarters control room, said.

The cause of the fire is under investigation, he said, adding 43 shanties and 12 shops were burnt to ashes.

On Monday night, a fire originated at Sat Tola slum in Mohakhali, burning down around 100 shanties and shops while 60 shanties were gutted in a fire at Jahuri Mahalla slum in Mohammadpur yesterday.

Tazreen fire victim dies amid calls for reparation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A former worker of Tazreen Fashions passed away yesterday morning due to her injuries. The disabled worker had been protesting in front of Jatiya Press Club.

For over two months, workers had been staging a sit-in in front of the press club, demanding proper compensation, rehabilitation and treatment for their injuries sustained during the fire at Tazreen Fashions in November 24, 2012 At least 113 were killed and 172 were injured. The workers demands for justice and reparations have not yet been met.

Thirty-two-year-old Mosammat Sharmeen Akhter breathed her last at Nischintapur, where Tazreen was located, and where the worker resided till her demise.

She was suffering from chronic injuries caused by lung haemorrhage. On the day of the tragedy, Sharmeen was attempting to exit building after the fire alarm rang. Caught between panic-seized workers, Sharmeen fell, and was trampled as people attempted to run out of the building, said Nasima Akter, another former worker of the factory.

Sharmeen's ribs were shattered, and her lungs were punctured. This caused internal bleeding, followed by infection and lung cancer, Nasima added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Investigators looking into Monir's SUVs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT Investigators will now scrutinise how

BRTA sources said one SUV (Dhaka Metro Gha - 157007) is registered under Sherpur-1 MP Atiur Rahman Atik, also arliament whip.

Kwe Shwe Hla betrayed Mro people: PCP OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Chairperson of Bandarban Hill District Council (BHDC) Kwe Shwe Hla, has betrayed the Mro people by allegedly giving their jhum land in Lama upazila's Dola Para for tourism, said Parbatya Chattogram Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) in a statement yesterday. BHDC took the jhum land under the promise of facilitating the livelihoods of local people by exhibiting agricultural technology and developed farming methods there. But without any discussion with the local Mro people, the chairman leased the land to an organisation for tourism purposes, said the statement. The chairman in question said at a press conference on Sunday that the land was taken following a discussion with the Mro community. "No one lived in that area and no Mro people will be affected," he claimed. PCP said in their statement that Kwe Shwe Hla's words were contrary to the reality. In the statement PCP demanded immediate cancellation of the lease and a stop to all forms of tourism-related construction in Chimbuk area. Though there is provision in CHT Peace Accord to discuss with regional council in carrying out all development activities and council functions, Chairman Kwe Shwe Hla didn't follow this procedure, and his actions are not in the interest of Mro people and their livelihood of jhum cultivation, said the statement. Despite several attempts to reach Kwe Shwe Hla for a comment on PCP's statement, he could not be reached. SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

A school looking after its students

Birshreshtha Munshi Abdur Rouf College

The road behind the Land covered vans even during the day,

Monir Hossain alias Golden Monir had been using SUVs registered under names of current and former lawmakers.

They will also check the process of importing such vehicles into Bangladesh. Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized five vehicles from Monir's car showroom "Auto Car Selection" on the capital's Pragati Sarani, during a 12-hour drive on Saturday.

Monir could not show papers for three of the seized vehicles. He and his family members were using two other SUVs registered under names of two current and former MPs, intelligence sources said.

According to law, an MP cannot transfer ownership of their duty-free vehicle within five years of purchase.

An officer closely involved with investigation told The Daily Star that they handed over keys of the five luxury vehicles to Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) yesterday.

"BRTA will first inspect how those vehicles were imported and who brought them into Bangladesh. Then National Board of Revenue will investigate the matter," he said.

The registration was issued on August 20, 2017, mentioning NAM Bhaban on Manik Mia Avenue as the address. On the number plate, Auto Car Selection was mentioned

along with the registration number. According to intelligence sources, the MP brought the duty-free SUV and sold it off to Monir, who then used it himself.

The Daily Star phoned Atik yesterday, but he did not receive the call. Atik earlier told reporters that he kept the car at Monir's place, as he was using a government car.

Another vehicle (Dhaka Metro Gha 174444) was registered under former Kurigram-3 MP Akkas Ali Sarker. The registration was issued on February 10, 2019, which also mentioned Auto Car Selection.

Akkas claimed he sent the vehicle to Monir's garage for repair.

Both the vehicles were seized from the parking area of Monir's six-storey building in the capital's Merul Badda area.

Recently, Monir presented a Prado SUV

arranges online counselling sessions

RASHIDUL HASAN

The prolonged lockdown and transition to online schooling has had an undesired side effect -- its negative impact on students' mental health.

According to experts, the situation is quite dire and needs immediate attention from educational authorities. Fortunately for the students of Birshreshtha Munshi Abdur Rouf Public College, its authorities have come up with some measures to tackle this.

"Many of our students are going through various kinds of mental problems, all stemming from the pandemic. This is quite concerning for us, which is why we are arranging counselling and motivational sessions to help them cope with their issues," Lt Col Hafez Md Zonayed Ahmed, principal of the college, told The Daily Star. In addition, the school is also conducting virtual sessions for the guardians, to aid them in understanding the students' predicaments, he added.

Lt Col Zonayed said he has spoken to almost all his students and their parents and found out some insights. "Many parents have informed that sometimes it is difficult to keep up with their children's moods. On the other side, students have informed me of their boredom, fatigue, and loneliness borne out of not seeing their friends for so long," he said.

"So far nine sessions have been held for both students and parents where noted psychiatrist Dr Helal Ahmed, Dr Almasur Rahman, and Brit Gen (retd) Md Baker spoke to them," Lt Col Zonayed said.

Two of these sessions were conducted separately for female students only, where noted psychiatrist Professor Mehjabin Hoque shared her views on how to deal with specifically feminine problems.

Farin Islam, a second-grader at the school, told this correspondent that staying home for months without seeing his friends has made him miserable. He said

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

High Court justifies law to carry out virtual proceedings STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday justified the law that has empowered the country's courts to virtually carry out the judicial proceedings through videoconferences and other digital means.

The HC summarily rejected a writ petition that challenged the legality of the Usage of Information Communication Technology by Court Act, 2020 allowing the virtual court functions.

The HC bench of Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Md Badiuzzaman passed the order after holding hearing on the petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer AKM Asiful Haque last month.

The HC said in the rejection order that virtual court system has been introduced in many countries including neighbouring India during the Covid-19 pandemic in order to avert infection, Deputy Attorney General Dr Md Bashir Ullah told The Daily Star.

Citing the HC observation, he said virtual court functions are not "in-camera proceedings", as lawyers, litigants and even media persons can participate in this court SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Five acres of land was reclaimed after Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority conducted a drive yesterday to remove illegal structures at Ferighat area of Narayanganj's Sadar upazila, on the bank of Dhaleshwari River. Such drives will continue, as per the High Court's directive, officials said,

PHOTO: SANAD SAHA

MEDIA STAFF SACKED DURING COVID Steps to be taken for their reinstatement

Says state minister for information Bss, Dhaka

State Minister for Information Murad Hasan yesterday said steps will be taken to reinstate media workers who lost their jobs during the coronavirus period.

He urged media owners not to fire personnel during this difficult time, and said this issue will be discussed with media owners and concerned professional organisations, said a press release.

Murad said this while speaking at the concluding session of a programme titled 'Mass Media's Fight During Corona: Painting and Photography' organised by Broadcast Journalist Center (BJC) at the auditorium of National Museum in the capital.

Appreciating the role of journalists during the pandemic, Murad said BJC members worked to serve humanity risking their lives during the difficult days of Covid-19.

The sacrifice and dedication of journalists will be written in gold letters and will remain an example for all, Murad added.

Additional Secretary of Health Services Division Enamul Haque, DMD of Gazi Group Golam Mortuza Bappa, Shaker Ahmed, Nur Safa Julhas, Nazrul Kabir, Dr Ashraful Haque and Dr Saleh Md Tusher also addressed the programme, with president of the organisation Rahul Raha in the chair.

Satrasta back

Tejgoan, they will have to create a central parking facility for transportation of goods as well. "This problem will never be fixed without solving it."

He said the crux of the problem is the central truck terminal, built illegally on railway land beside Tejgaon Railway Station.

Asked, Mohammad Nazrul Islam, divisional estate officer and deputy commissioner (railway lands and buildings) of Bangladesh Railway, said around eight acres of railway land is being used illegally for the truck stand. Mentionable, the 550-metre Satrasta is the only thoroughfare for the central truck terminal.

An on-duty traffic police told The Daily Stat last week that they try to keep the Mayor Annisul Road free from parking during daytime but if becomes virtually impossible for them to maintain traffic at night due to the trucks.

Trucks are parked on the road due to lack of accommodation facilities in the terminal, said many truckers.

However, Iqbal Habib said truck owners' association do not follow the loading and unloading schedules of goods. As a result, many trucks remain parked illegally on Satrasta

"No one is taking the initiative to construct a central parking facility, evicting encroachers," he said, adding that it is the duty of the city corporation to ensure that.

"This is a vital alternative road to reduce traffic pressure at Farmgate and Karwan Bazar -- the two busy business hubs in the city," he said.

Adil Mohammad Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Institute of Planners, said eviction of illegal occupants from Satrasta was a big achievement. But in absence of an alternative arrangement for truckers, they have once again started occupying the road.

"We need truck stands. But it should be outside the city not in the middle of it," he said. This truck stand must be removed to ensure smooth traffic movement on the road, he added.

Asked, Osman Ali, general secretary of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation, said there is shortage of space at Tejgaon truck terminal for which trucks that enter the city after 11pm have to park on this road.

But the road remains free of trucks during the day, he claimed. "I will talk to local leaders to keep the road clear for smooth traffic," he said.

About parking trucks on other roads connecting Satrasta, he reiterated that it was due to space constraint at the terminal.

Contacted, DNCC Mayor Atigul Islam said he has conducted drives twice to keep the roads free. "I will again send magistrates to take necessary steps shortly," he assured.

About space constraints at the terminal, the mayor said a comprehensive plan is needed in this regard. He said they are working on the issue and trying to come up with a permanent solution.

High Court FROM PAGE 3

proceedings using technology.

The HC also said the contents of the act are not contradictory to the constitution of the country, DAG Bashir Ullah added.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin opposed the writ petition while writ petitioner AKM Asiful Haque himself argued for the petition.

In the petition, he said that the law is contradictory to the constitution as there was no recommendation from the president for passing it as a money bill in the parliament. He also said the bill on the law was passed hurriedly in the parliament.

The parliament on July 8 passed "Adalat Kartrik Tathya Projukti Byabohar Bill 2020' in a bid to empower country's courts in carrying out trial proceedings through videoconferences and other digital means. Law Minister Anisul Huq placed the bill which was passed by voice votes.

Earlier, an ordinance was promulgated by President Abdul Hamid with an aim to reduce the backlog of huge number of cases in different courts due to countrywide closure since March 25. The ordinance was approved by the cabinet on May 7.

According to the previous law, the trial proceedings were only run in physical presence of judges, counsels and witnesses in the court.

Following promulgation of the ordinance, it was possible to run the proceedings during the coronavirus situation as social distancing was necessary to contain the spread of Covid-19.

It was possible for the judges to run the trial proceedings through videoconferences and other digital means keeping the accused in jails, the lawyers in their residences and the witnesses in other places during the coronavirus crisis as per the ordinance.

Tazreen fire

FROM PAGE 3

Shahidul Islam Sabuj, general secretary, Garments Workers Unity Forum, said since her financial condition was very poor, and nobody cared about her ailment; she died without proper treatment.

Sharmeen had to arrange funds by herself for the treatment. "She had loans worth Tk 10 lakh for her treatment and family expenses, as she couldn't work. They even took loans against their two rooms in Nischintapur, Savar," said Nasima.

Sharmeen's husband Karim, a day labourer, said she was paid only three months' salary after the incident. The couple have two sons.

According to Sabuj, Sharmeen was present at the sit-in in front of Jatiya Press Club for a dignified compensation and proper treatment with 44 other former workers, who have been protesting for 70 to this report.

Investigators

FROM PAGE 3

to an incumbent state minister to get away from a case filed against him in 2019, according to intelligence sources. The Daily Star checked the registration number with BRTA, which found it to be fake.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, BRTA Chairperson Nur Mohammad Mazumder said they are helping investigation agencies with information

related to the vehicles. Anti-Corruption Meanwhile, them that they want to collaborate with the elite force to investigate the irregularities same period.

days. "After staying two days at the footpath, she got sick and we sent her home," said Sabuj.

It has been eight years since the horrific incident, yet most workers of Tazreen Fashions are yet to receive a dignified, proper amount of compensation from the government, Bangladesh Labour Welfare Foundation and Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

The injured workers on Tuesday even decided to march to Gono Bhaban with a three-point demand — compensation, rehabilitation and long-term treatment. But they were barred by the police.

"If the government still doesn't pay heed to us, we all have to die like Sharmeen," said an aggrieved Nasima. Our Savar correspondent contributed

and wealth of Monir. Rab on Tuesday sent letters to three separate agencies -- NBR, BRTA and Criminal Investigation Department -- in

this connection. Monir was placed on 18-day remand under the detective branch's custody in three cases filed under Special Powers Act, Narcotics Control Act and Arms Act with Badda Police Station on November 22

However, he must be in remand for Commission yesterday called Rab and told 11 days instead of 18, as the seven-day remands in two cases were granted for the

HC seeks

FROM PAGE 3 were not equipped to treatment provide newborns. They advised

to

Azad to admit them to Dhaka Shishu Hospital. Shishu Hospital authorities told Azad he had to pay Tk 5,000 for treatment of each baby per day, which he could not afford.

Azad reached out to a HC judge, who advised that the newborns be taken to BSMMU, where its director would meet them. He went to BSMMU with the twins on an ambulance at around 2pm. Once there, BSMMU authorities told him the director had gone home after conducting a surgery.

A doctor later visited the babies in the ambulance and declared them dead.

A school

FROM PAGE 3 the sessions are helping him become more positive.

Third-grader Avon said, "I've become tired of watching TV and playing games on the smartphone all the time. I always used to wonder about when the school will reopen, and this made me restless," he added. "But the sessions are helping me realise the situation and calm down a bit."

Mob beats

FROM PAGE 12 state, a fight broke out between the villagers and robbers.

As the villagers were just about to have cornered the robbers, all but three of them escaped.

The villagers beat up the three, leaving two of the them dead on the spot and the other badly injured.

Police later went to the spot, recovered the two bodies and detained injured Manik, a resident of West Abdullahpur in Kishoregonj's Kuliarchar upazila. He was sent to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital before being referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The police inspector said deceased Sohel was accused in several cases, including some of murder.

The bodies were sent to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsies.

37 killed

FROM PAGE 12 but we don't know how many," it said. A police source told AFP that when rescue workers arrived at the scene, "there were bodies everywhere.' "It was impossible to tell who had been in the truck and who had been in the bus," he said.

White House co-op 'sincere' FROM PAGE 12

Biden's comments come one day after the GSA informed him that the Trump administration is ready to begin the formal transition process. His transition team is now in talking to all federal agencies, a transition official told CNN.

Dr Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious diseases doctor, said Tuesday he has had preliminary conversations with members of Biden's team and looks forward to more substantive discussions in the future.

An administration official said the White House has given approval for Biden to receive the president's daily classified intelligence brief.

The decision means Biden will have access to the latest intelligence reports about major national security threats around the globe.

The GSA letter was the first step the administration has taken to acknowledge President Donald Trump's defeat and marked a considerable turning point against his bid to overturn his loss

Still, the Biden team had not waited for the formal transition process to begin preparing for the presidency, as Biden introduced a slate of veteran diplomats and policy-makers on Tuesday

Looking ahead to his administration, Biden vowed his term would not be "a third Obama term."

"We face a totally different world than we faced in the Obama-Biden administration," he said. "President Trump has changed the landscape."

He continued, "It's become America first. It's been America alone. We find ourselves in a position where our alliances are being frayed. It's a totally -- that's why I've found people who join the administration and keep points that represent the spectrum of the American people as well the spectrum of the Democratic Party."

Asked Tuesday if he supports investigations into Trump after he leaves office, as some Democrats have called for, Biden vowed to "not do what this President does and use the Justice Department as my vehicle to insist that something happen."

There are a number of investigations that I've read about that are at a state level. There's nothing at all I can or cannot do about that. But I'm focused on getting the American public back in a place where they have some certainty, some surety, some knowledge that they can make it," he said.

"The middle-class and working-class people are being crushed. That's my focus."

And asked whether he has spoken with Sens. Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren

problems of the mill. The prime minister meets a delegation of the workers and assures them that he would hold discussions NEW BARTER TRADE

and the Soviet Union providing for appreciable increase in the volume of trade between the two countries. This is disclosed to newsmen at Dhaka Airport by I.I. Grishin, Soviet deputy minister for foreign trade who arrived as the head of an eight-member trade delegation yesterday for talks with Bangladesh officials.

with all concerned in near future and would take steps for ensuring smooth production.

AGREEMENT WITH SOVIET UNION A new barter trade

agreement is expected to be signed between Bangladesh

He said that his country was satisfied with the turnout of the first barter trade with Bangladesh for the current

Bangabandhu The scourge worsens amid FROM PAGE 12 number of reported cases went down. This is because the men could go out of their homes

again," said Shaheen. Nina Goswami, senior deputy of ASK, said, "Rape [incidents] too have gone up from 732 in 2018, to 1,413 in 2019, and 1,349 up until October 2020."

Dr Faustina Pereira, director of the Human Rights and Legal Aid Services at Brac, said, 'The family sphere is the most dangerous," while pointing out that Bangladesh still holds reservations about ratifying Article 16 of The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Article 16 addresses equal rights of women in marriage, family relations, and divorce. "The government says that the withdrawal of the reservation is not possible because the society is not ready for such modification and the government is mindful of the possible repercussions from conservative religious groups and therefore is taking cautious steps,

said Faustina. "The very fact that this is the reasoning put out there is a matter of concern," she said, adding, "Our progress is in the economic sphere but not in the family sphere and that is where the true test of equality lies."

Orlagh McCann, representative of the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, pointed out that many countries made special provisions to make sure that the needs of women were addressed.

"The special rapporteur has been noticing and receiving information that because of the measures being put by governments in dealing with Covid-19, there was a huge rise in cases of domestic violence. She urges governments to address domestic violence even during the pandemic," said McCann.

"The special rapporteur noted that the current crisis exacerbated the gaps that already existed, especially when responding to cases of gender-based violence.'

Dr Abul Hossain, project director of Multi-Sectoral Programme on Violence Against Women at the Ministry of women and Children's Affairs, said, "I believe the number of public prosecutors can be increased to expedite the judicial system."

Mega-shark raised its young

FROM PAGE 12 meet Bangabandhu at his residence and

apprised him of certain

Police are still investigating the cause of the crash.

Rescue workers were still treating victims at the scene. Taguai is about 340 kilometers (210 miles) west of Sao Paulo, Brazil's biggest city and economic capital.

Foreign minister

FROM PAGE 12 been cancelled.

A delegation comprised of officials from the foreign ministry and Bangladesh mission to the OIC in Saudi will attend the meeting on November 27-28.

about Cabinet positions, Biden said, "We already have significant representation among progressives in our administration, but there's nothing really off the table."

Virus load soars in US FROM PAGE 12

nations were slowly relaxing measures ahead of their own Christmas holidays, as a second wave of infections slowed following weeks of lockdowns.

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen warned, however, against easing restrictions too quickly. "We must learn from the summer and not repeat the same mistakes, relaxing too fast. she said yesterday.

In a televised address, French President Emmanuel Macron announced shops could reopen from Saturday, and nationwide stay-at-home orders would be lifted from December 15. British authorities also announced restrictions on social mixing and said travel would be eased across the UK over Christmas.

MIXED SIGNALS IN ASIA

Elsewhere in Europe, 16 German states agreed to slightly loosen limits on social contact over Christmas, according to a draft deal seen by AFP, even as cases near one million there.

State leaders agreed to cap gatherings to 10 people over the December 23 to January 1 holiday -- double the limit for the rest of December.

In Australia, the country's most populous state, New South Wales, eased social distancing measures and allowed employees back to work, Premier Gladys Berejiklian announced yesterday, after three weeks without a locally transmitted Covid-19 case.

Singapore, which has one of the world's lowest virus death rates, announced it had no live clusters of Covid-19 cases in the country -- the first time since its outbreak began earlier this year. And in more positive news, China recorded just five new coronavirus cases on Tuesday -- all imported, authorities said yesterday.

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Please visit the NSU website for downloading the application form. Incomplete applications and applications received past the closing date will not be entertained.

Vice-Chancellor North South University Bashundhara, Dhaka-1229 E-mail: vicechancellor@northsouth.edu www.northsouth.edu year and was hopeful that a good increase would be possible in the coming year. SOURCES: November 27, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Hindu families

FROM PAGE 12 grabbing the adjacent lands.

"At one stage, he took away the entire 51 decimals. He has dug a pond and constructed a semi-concrete house on the

disputed land. [#]If we demand our land, Mostafa and his cohorts

threaten us with life," Paritosh added

His nine-year-old son was fishing in the pond on September 28. Mostafa's cohorts drove him away and threatened to beat him

Around 11:00pm that day, Mostafa along with a local named Alal Miah, 50, and some others attacked Paritosh's house and beat up all the family members.

them and sent them to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Paritosh's wife Dipa

lodged a case with Pagla Police Station accusing Mustafa among othe days later.

A court then sent Mostafa to jail and g bail to the other acc "We do not want our ancestral lands. so miserable that we to live in our home police protection," P told The Daily Star. Md Shahinuzzam Khan, officer-in-char of Pagla Police Static said he is keeping reg contacts with the fan and necessary measu

were taken for their Roksana Begum, chairman of Duttaei Union Parishad, said would take measures ensuring their safety. FROM PAGE 12

Indeed, the reliance of Megalodon on nurseries may have contributed to the end of their 20-million-year reign, according to the research.

Otodus megalodon -- sometimes classified as a Carcharocles megalodon -- took 25 years to become an adult -- "an extremely delayed sexual maturity", the authors said in the research paper.

But once it was fully grown, the shark could reach up to 18 metres, three times the size of the largest great white shark, made famous by the 1975 hit-movie Jaws.

As an apex predator, and up until its extinction around three million years ago, the adult megalodon had no rivals among other ocean hunters and feasted on smaller sharks and even whales.

But its young were vulnerable to attacks by other predators, often other razortoothed sharks.

Nurseries on shallow continental shelves with extensive smaller fish for food and few competing predators gave them the ideal space to reach their awesome size.

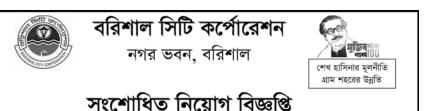
"Our results reveal, for the first time, that nursery areas were commonly used by the O. megalodon over large temporal and spatial scales," said the authors.

The research team discovered a nursery zone off the eastern coast of Spain in Tarragona Province after visiting a museum and observing a collection of megalodon teeth

"Many of them were quite small for such a large animal," the authors from British University of Bristol, Carlos Martinez-Perez and Humberto Ferron, told AFP.

Judging by the size of the teeth, they surmised the area had once been home to young megalodons.

The Spanish nursery could be described as "a perfect place to grow", the authors said.



ম্মারক নং বিসিসি/প্রঃচ্ঞঃনিঃনথি-১২/১৯-২৭৪

তারিখঃ ২৫/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন এর প্রশাসনিক শাখার স্মারক নং-বিসিসি/প্রচুঃনিঃনথি ১২/১৯-২৬৩ তারিখঃ ১৯/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ মোতাবেক "০৩ (তিন) বছর মেয়াদী সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে চুক্তিভিত্তিক জনবল নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখান্ত আব্বান" প্রসঙ্গে গত ২২/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখে বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন ও দি ডেইলি স্টার পত্রিকায় নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশিত হয়। অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তিটির আংশিক সংশোধন করা হল

8										
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in Bangladesh

RANKED BY

ASIA 2020

Management Information Systems (Ph.D. only)

Supply Chain Management (Ph.D. only)

Business Statistics (Ph.D. only)

Accounting (Ph.D. only)

Finance (Ph.D. only)

Microbiology

Business Mathematics (Ph.D. only)

Operations Management (Ph.D. only)

Marketing and Analytics (Ph.D. only)

up, if he went there again.

Neighbours rescued

DHAKA THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2020, AGRAHAYAN 11, 1427 BS

COUNTRY



An illegal polythene factory runs its operation at Bishbari village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila, posing health hazard for workers and local people as well.

Illegal polythene factory pollutes environment

Locals said the factory was set-up overnight about a month ago

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A polythene factory is running illegally at Bishbari village in Aditmari upazila of the district, polluting the environment there.

The factory has continued production of the harmful item in the populated area for over a month without any permission from the Department of Environment (DoE), locals said.

Shahidul Islam, a farmer of the village, said that a man named Salam Miah had set up an illegal polythene factory in the village fact, noise pollution by the factory affects their lives in various ways. They cannot fall asleep as the

hours The environment of the village is being polluted due to the illegal factory which makes polythene, he said, adding that permission from DoE.

Altaf Hossain of the same village said the factory is running illegally the environment. The owner of the factory was asked to remove it, but he set up a factory. he refused to do it.

agricultural crops in the village may be disrupted, said Altaf. Mobarak Hossain, a worker

factory runs its operation for 24 of the factory, said the factory produces an average of 600kg of polythene per day. Polythene of the factory is supplied to different districts of Rangpur division.

However, owner of the factory the factory continued production Salam Miah claimed that a of the harmful item without any maximum of 300kg of polythene is being produced in this factory everv dav

Salalm added that he worked in in the village. It is very harmful for a polythene factory of Dhaka for a long time. Returning to the village,

Asked if there was any If the factory runs its operation permission from the Department overnight over a month ago. In here this way, the production of of Environment or the upazila administration for building the factory with the help of local polythene factory, he said he is yet to take any permission from any

department.

He remained silent when question of getting electricity connection to the factory from the irrigation pump line on agricultural land.

рното

STAR

However, Salam said some villagers work at his factory. He has created employment for them.

Kazi Saifuddin Ahmed, an inspector at DoE in Rangpur, said the factory is running illegally. It has been secretly making polythene.

Immediate steps will be taken by conducting a drive in the administration, said the DoE official.

300 Kalapara women helping families with additional income

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Ash gourds are hanging from the net on tree in her home yard. Each ash gourd weighs around 5kg. She has also cultivated other vegetables in the yard. She has used vermicompost fertiliser in the yard.

Salma Begum, wife of day labourer Shahidul Islam of Punamapara village in Kalapara upazila of the district, has earned around Tk 10,000 from selling the vegetables in the last two and a half months. With this extra income, she is helping her husband to run their four-member family.

"It is very tough to run our family with the low income of my husband. So, she is now cultivating vegetable and rearing goats and ducks to assist her husband in running the family," said Salma, adding, that she bought two goats by selling the eggs of ducks.

She further added that they are now self-sufficient by rearing ducks and selling organic vegetables. Apart from this, the nutritional needs are also being met.

Salma's neighbour Hanufa Begum is also cultivating various vegetables. She has now 40 ducks in her farm. She bought seven goats by selling eggs of ducks. By selling vegetables and duck eggs, she is now earning extra money to support her ninemember family.

"I am very happy that I'm now able

to meet the needs of my family with my additional income," said Hanufa Begum.

Like Salma and Hanufa, many housewives of the village have engaged themselves in rearing goats and ducks and cultivating organic vegetables and helping the family with their additional income.

A number of men and women in the coastal area have recently achieved selfsufficiency in various types of farming, including vegetable farming. Thus, they are earning extra income to support their families.

A non-governmental organization (NGO) named 'Friendship' has provided training to 300 women and 60 men in five unions of Kalapara upazila on various topics including vegetable cultivation, duck and goat rearing and vermicompost fertilizer.

The unions are Latachpali, Dhulasar, Lalua, Tiakhali and Chakamiya, said an official of the NGO.

At the end of the training in January this year, 12 ducks and necessary vegetable seeds were provided to each of trainees free of cost, said Jewel Hasan, manager of the 'Assistance for Sustainable Development project', implemented by Friendship.

Plastic containers have also been provided to each of the trainees for storing the seeds, said the project manager.



The woman produces ash gourd in her home yard at Punamapara village in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

'Wonder girl' reaches for

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার উপজেলা স্বাষ্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় গোয়াইনঘাট, সিলেট gowainghat@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

the stars

Mohsin Milon with Firoz A Muzahid

Out of all the limbs in her body, only one arm is functional. And in that arm, only three out of four fingers work properly.

When Shahida Khatun was born this way to grocer Rafi Uddin and Johra Begum, their neighbours in Shimulia village of Jashore's Jhikargachha upazila, told Johra that the child was born this way because of the 'sins' Johra had committed.

While Shahida was growing up, the villagers and their children would not speak to her because she was 'good for nothing', reminisced a tearful Johra. "That was how Shahida spent her childhood!"

Now, 29 years later, Shahida holds a master's degree and the same neighbours come to her for study lessons or for advice on various other issues.

But ensuring proper education for a differently abled child like Shahida was quiet difficult for her parents.

Her father Rafi Uddin said the agony he and his wife endured for their fourth child Shahida was unimaginable. Especially comments made by the villagers about Shahida were brutal.

Ignoring all the negativity, they took five-year-old Shahida to a missionary school, St Louis Primary School, in the area to get her admitted. But their efforts were faced by a major obstacle when most of the teachers at the school opposed her admission there.

The opposing teachers said since young Shahida cannot move about by herself, she would be a burden for the staffers of the rent. school when she would need to use the restrooms during school hours.

Shahida was finally admitted to the school at the request of Sister Joseph Marie of the mission.

Since then, there was no turning back for Shahida. Rain or shine, she would make it to the school every day, riding on the laps of her



Shahida Khatun

parents or elder siblings.

Her perseverance and keen interest in getting educated eventually helped her win the hearts of teachers and neighbours alike.

In 2009, Shahida crossed her first big landmark by passing the Secondary School Certificate examinations from St Louis High School. She passed Higher Secondary Certificate exam from Shimulia Degree College three years later.

When she enrolled at Shahid Mashiur Rahman Degree College, six kilometres away from home, her father arranged a rickshaw-van for her commute at Tk 100 daily

After securing the BA degree from there, Shahida went on to enrol herself in master's course at Jashore MM College. She earned her master's in political science from the college in 2016.

Shahida has proved her worth by passing all the major public examinations in the country. A befitting job at this stage would PHOTO: COLLECTED

be the ultimate acknowledgement for her after long years of struggle, her father said.

Shahida's younger sister Nazma Khatun, an honours degree student, said she witnesses how much hardship her elder sister faces every day and she hopes that her sister's achievements would make her a role model for other differently abled children in the country.

But in order to portray that image to the society, she would have to earn a decent living from a job with prospect, she added.

Hoping to have the opportunity to explain her life struggle to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina someday, Shahida said for over eight months, she has been working in a teaching position at a school in Raghunathnagar.

"I need a job to make a living," but the future there is bleak because the school, Babar Ali Sardar Special Intelligent School, is not in the government's MPO (monthly payment order) list, she also said.

স্মারকনং উম্বাক/গোয়াইন/এমএসআর/দরপত্র/২০২০-২০২১/৯৫৫

তারিখ ঃ ২৪/১১/২০২০ ইং

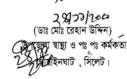
উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার পরিকঙ্গনা কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় .গোয়াইনঘাট সিলেট সহ এর আওতাধীন একটি উপ-স্বাস্থ্য কেন্দ্র সমূহের জন্য ২০২০-২০২১ ইং অর্থ বছরের গ্রুপ ভিত্তিক এমএসআর সামগ্রী (মেডিকেল এন্ড সার্জিকেল রিকুইজিটস) ক্রয়/সংগ্রহের নিমিত্তে গৌণখাতে পাবলিক আইন ২০০৬ ও তৎপরবর্তী সংশোধনী এবং সংগ্রহ বিধিমালা ২০০৮ ও পরবর্তী সংশোধনী মতে নিম্রোক্ত ছক মোতাবেক প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী/প্রস্তুতকারী প্রতিষ্টান/ঠিকাদার গনের নিকট হইতে নিয়ম ও শর্তাবলী সম্বলিত দরপত্র পুরন নির্ধারিত সিডিউলে গ্রুপ ভিত্তিক সিলগালাকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাইতেছে।

2	মন্ত্রনালয় / বিভাগ	8	খাহ্যু সেবা বিভাগ, খাহ্যু ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রনালয় ।						
ર	সংস্থার নাম	8	ষাহ্য অধিদপ্তর ।						
৩	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর পদবী ও মোবাইল নং	8	উপজেল স্বাছ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তা, ব	উপজেল স্বাছ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তা, গোয়াইনঘাট, সিলেট, মোবাইল-০১৭১৭৬৭৯২১৭।					
8	দরপত্র পদ্বতি	8	উনুক্ত দরপত্র আহ্বানের মাধ্যমে।						
¢	অর্থের উৎস	0	রাজন্ব বরান্দ (জিওবি)।						
৬	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং ও তারিখ	ê	স্মারকনং উম্বাক/গোয়াইন/এমএসত	মার/দরপত্র/২০২০-২০২১/৯৫৫ তাং-২৪/১	১/২০২০ ইং				
٩	দরপত্রের নাম / কাজের বিবরন	e	২০২০-২০২১ ইং অর্থ বছরে গোয়াইনঘাট উপজেলা স্বাছ্য কমপ্লেক্স ও এর আওতাধীন একটি উপ-স্বাছ্য কেন্দ্রর জন্য মোট ০৬ (ছয়টি) গ্রুপে এমএসআর সামগ্রী সরবরাহ। গ্রুপ নং ক- ঔষধপত্র - খ- মেডিকেল যন্ত্রপাতি, গ- গজ, বেভেজ ও তুলা, ঘ- আসবাবপত্র ও কিচেন সামগ্রী, ঙ- লিলেন সামগ্রী, চ - কেমিক্যাল এড রিয়েজেন্ট।						
ď	দরপত্র আব্বানকারী দণ্ডরের নাম	8	উপজেলা স্বাছ্যু ও পরিবার পরিকল্পন	না কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় ,গোয়াইনঘাট সিলেট ।					
\$	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	8	উপজেলা স্বাহ্যু ও পরিবার পরিকল্পন	না কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় ,গোয়াইনঘাট সিলেট					
	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও			ইং হইতে ১৩/১২/২০২০ইং অফিস চলাকালী					
50	সময়	8	সঞ্চাহিক ছুটির দিন ব্যতিত)।						
22	দরপত্র গ্রহনের তারিখ ও সময়	8	১৫/১২/২০২০ইং দুপুর ১২ ঘটিকা	পর্যন্ত ।					
১২	দরপত্র গ্রহনের ছান		০১. উপজেলা খাছ্য ও পরিবার পরিকল্পনা কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, গোয়াইনঘাট সিলেট । ০২.নির্বাহী আফিসার এর কার্যালয়, গোয়াইনঘাট, সিলেট। ০৩.অফিসার ইনচার্জ এর কার্যালয়, গোয়াইনঘাট থানা ,সিলেট।						
20	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	8		, টকা (দরপত্র দাতা কিংবা প্রতিনিধির উপছিতি	তে যদি কেহ থাকেন)।				
\$8	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের ছান	8		না কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় ,গোয়াইনঘাট সিলেট					
20	দরপত্র দাতাদের যোগ্যতা	8		ত ব্যবসায়ী/প্রতিষ্ঠান/ ঠিকাদার / সরবরাহকা					
20	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য 🔹	0	গ্রুপ নং - ক / খ / গ/ ঙ প্রতি গ্রু চালানের মাধ্যমে কোডনং - ১ -	পে ৭৫০(সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা এবং ঘ/চ ৫ ২ ৭ ১ ১ - ০ ০ ০ ০ - ২ ৩ ৬ ৬ এ সোনা র ক্যাশিয়ার এর নিকট জমা প্রদান সাপেক্ষে শ	০০(পাচ শত) টাকা (অফেরৎ যোগ্য) লী ব্যাংকে, গোয়াইনঘাট শাখায় জমা				
		-	গ্রুপ ও কাজের বিবরণ	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য(অফেরৎ যোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানত (ফেরৎ যোগ্য)				
	· · · · · ·		ক- ঔষধপত্র	৭৫০(সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা	৮০০০০(আশি হাজার)টাকা মাত্র				
			খ- মেডিকেল যন্ত্রপাতি	৭৫০(সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা	৪৫০০০(পয়তাল্লিশ হাজার) টাকা মাত্র				
	দরপত্র দলিলের নিরাপত্তা জামানত		গ- গজ, বেন্ডেজ ও তুলা	৭৫০(সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা	২০০০০(বিশ হাজার) টাকা মাত্র				
	" উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য কমপ্লেক্স, গোয়াইনঘাট,		ঘ- আসবাবপত্র ও কিচেন সামগ্রী	৫০০(পাচ শত) টাকা	১০০০০(দশ হাজার)টাকা মাত্র				
	সিলেট, এর অনুকুলে ব্যাংক দ্রাফট / পে				২০০০০(বিশ হাজার) টাকা মাত্র				
১৬	- অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে	8	চ - কেমিক্যাল এন্ড রিয়েজেন্ট	৫০০(পাচ শত) টাকা	১০০০০(দশ হাজার)টাকা মাত্র				
29	সরবরাহকাল	8	কাৰ্য্যাদেশ (নোটিফিকেশন অব এং	ওয়ার্ড) মোতাবেক।					

* অনিবার্য কারন বশতঃ এই দরপত্রের তারিখ পরিবর্তন যোগ্য।

্র্র কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে দরপত্র গ্রহন অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন।

* অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী দরপত্র সিডিউলে সংযুক্ত আছে।



INTERNATIONAL



ETHIOPIA CIVIL WAR PM rejects 'interference'

AFP, Addis Ababa

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed yesterday said he rejected international "interference" in Ethiopia's affairs, hours before a deadline for Tigray's rebellious leaders to surrender or face an assault on their capital.

Abiy, the winner of last year's Nobel Prize, late Sunday gave the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) 72 hours to surrender -- an ultimatum rejected by the leader of the dissident northern region, who has said his people are "ready to die" for their homeland.

As the clock ticked down, the UN Security Council held its first meeting on the three-week old crisis, with particular concern for civilians in the regional capital Mekele.

Ethiopian forces say they are encircling the city with tanks ahead of an assault on the TPLF, and have urged its half million residents to leave.

Rights groups have warned that attacking the city could constitute a war crime. The UN, US, EU and others have urged restraint, and called for an immediate halt to

hostilities Fighting between the Ethiopian army and Tigrayan forces has raged since November 4, when Abiy ordered a military response to what he said were TPLF attacks on federal military camps.

More than 40,000 refugees have fled the violence into eastern Sudan, and rockets have fallen on the Eritrean capital Asmara and Ethiopian cities outside Tigray, spurring fears the conflict could widen.

AFGHANISTAN AID CONFERENCE \$12b pledged with conditions AFP, Geneva

Donors demanded an immediate ceasefire in Afghanistan as they pledged around \$12 billion in aid over four years -- but tied their money to civil rights being upheld in peace talks with the Taliban.

At a virtual global donor conference hosted from the UN in Geneva, countries affirmed their commitment to propping up a nation beset by violence between the Taliban and government forces, rampant corruption and

an imminent withdrawal of US troops. The international community called for an "immediate permanent and comprehensive ceasefire", as at least 14 people were killed in central Afghanistan when two blasts ripped through the historic city of Bamiyan, home to many members of the mainly Shia Hazara ethnic minority.

The twin bombing marked the latest big attack in Afghanistan, where violence has surged in recent months even as Taliban and Afghan government negotiators are meeting for peace talks in Qatar.

Efforts to rebuild Afghanistan began soon after a US-led invasion ousted the hardline Taliban regime from power in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. Donor nations gather every four years to pledge aid to Afghanistan, which is almost entirely reliant on foreign assistance despite years of promised reforms and attempts to grow the economy.

The Geneva conference insisted that the gains made over the last 19 years must be secured, namely democracy, the rule of law and human rights -- notably those of women, minorities and children.

With the final figures still to be collated, donors had pledged more than \$3 billion for 2021.

Annual commitments are expected to stay at that level, dependent on Kabul's performance, said Finnish development minister Ville Skinnari, who co-chaired the conference.

President-elect Joe Biden stands with his nominees for his national security team at his transition headquarters in the Queen Theater in Wilmington, Delaware, US, on Tuesday. (L-R), are: Antony Blinken to be secretary of state; Jake Sullivan to be U.S. national security adviser; Alejandro Mayorkas to be secretary of Homeland Security; Avril Haines to be director of national intelligence; John Kerry to be a special envoy for climate change; and Ambassador to the United Nations-nominee Linda Thomas-Greenfield, who stands behind Vice Presidentelect Kamala Haris. PHOTO: REUTERS

'Failure not an option'

Incoming US envoy Kerry vows to seek greater climate goals

AFP, Wilmington

Incoming US climate envoy John Kerry called Tuesday for a UN conference in Glasgow next year to raise global ambitions on environmental protection, warning that the Paris accord that he helped negotiate was insufficient.

President-elect Joe Biden has tapped the former secretary of state for the new position of presidential envoy on climate change, a sign of the importance the United States will assign the issue once he takes office on January 20.

"To end this crisis, the whole world must come together," Kerry said after Biden introduced him as part of his national security team in Wilmington, Delaware.

Speaking to Biden, Kerry said: "You're right to rejoin Paris on day one, and you're right to recognize that Paris alone is not enough."

"At the global meeting in Glasgow one year from now, all nations must raise ambition together or we will all fail together. And failure is not an option," Kerry said.

Outgoing President Donald Trump, whose administration is close to the fossil fuel industry, called the Paris accord unfair to the United States,

which became the only nation to exit the global pact. Biden also said he would unveil next month a White House policy coordinator to lead climate measures within the United States, where carbon emissions have been declining modestly due to a variety of market forces and local and state initiatives. "Let me be clear: I don't for a minute underestimate the difficulties of meeting my bold commitments to fighting climate change," Biden said.

"But at the same time, no one should underestimate for a minute my determination to do just that."

Negotiated by Kerry when he was the top US diplomat, the 2015 Paris accord committed all nations to limit warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels and encouraged them to go down to 1.5 degrees.

Scientists warn that the world is far behind in reaching the two-degree goal -- a level at which the planet will still see major effects but not the most catastrophic consequences of climate change such as widespread drought and submerged coastal areas.

The incoming Biden administration has said it is willing to work on climate change with China despite other disagreements.

2020 GLOBAL TERRORISM INDEX Deaths from attacks fall globally in 2019 AFP, Paris

The number of people killed in terror attacks worldwide fell for the fifth consecutive year in 2019, with conflict still the main driver of terror but an increase of "far-right terrorism" seen in the West, a leading think tank said yesterday.

Deaths from terrorism fell in 2019 to 13,826, a 15 percent fall from the year before and a further annual decline from a peak in 2014, the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) said in its 2020 Global Terrorism Index.

It warned that in North America, Western Europe and Oceania, deaths attributed to far-right terror have increased by 250 percent since 2014, with 89 killings in 2019.

"They are higher now than at any time in the last 50 years,″ it said.

It emphasised that conflict remains the primary driver of terrorism, with over 96 percent of deaths from terrorism in 2019 occurring in countries already in conflict.

It said the largest decreases in deaths occurred in Afghanistan and Nigeria but they remained "the only two countries to have experienced more than 1,000 deaths from terrorism."

For the second year in a row, South Asia was the region most impacted by terrorism, it said.

Scotland becomes first country to offer free period products

NEWS IN BRIEF

UP criminalises 'love jihad'

India's ruling Hindu nationalist party approved a decree in the country's most populous state Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday laying out prison terms up to five years for anyone compelling others to convert their faith or luring them into these conversions through marriage, officials said. The move follows a campaign by hardline Hindu groups against some interfaith marriages

that they describe as "love jihad", Muslim men engaging in a conspiracy to turn Hindu women away from their religion by seducing them. Under the new law, a man and woman belonging to different religions will have to give two months' notice to the district magistrate before they get married and they will be allowed to tie the knot if there are no objections.

Trump may pardon Flynn US President Donald Trump plans to pardon his former national security advisor Michael Flynn, who pleaded guilty in 2017 to lying to the FBI over his Russian contacts, US media reported Tuesday. Axios and the New York Times both cited unnamed sources as saying that Trump plans to include Flynn in a series of pardons he will issue in the final days of his presidency. Flynn's secret talks with the Russian

ambassador to Washington in December 2016, before Trump was inaugurated, were a cornerstone of the sprawling investigation by Special Counsel Robert Mueller into Moscow's meddling in the US election earlier that year.

Khamenei warns against hopes of 'opening' with West



A pro-democracy protester holds up a mock banknote during an anti-government rally outside the headquarters of the Siam Commercial Bank in Bangkok yesterday. Thai pro-democracy protesters gathered in Bangkok yesterday as police summoned 12 of their leaders to answer charges of royal defamation, the first use of the draconian law in almost three years. The focus of yesterday's protest is the secrecy surrounding the royal finances. PHOTO: AFP

as cyclone nears India

evacuated

AFP, Puducherry

Homes

Several thousand people in south-eastern India fled their homes yesterday, out of the path of a cyclone due to slam coastal areas after midnight, bringing with it heavy rain. Nivar, classified as a very severe cyclonic storm, was expected to pack winds of 120 kilometres per hour and gusts of up to 145 km/h when it makes landfall, forecasters said. Thousands of state and national emergency personnel have been deployed in the southern regions of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry.

AFP, Edinburgh

Scotland on Tuesday voted to offer free universal access to period products, becoming the first country in the world to do so.

The Scottish Parliament voted unanimously in favour of the Period Products Bill, which makes it a legal right to have free access to sanitary products in public buildings.

"We all agree that no one should have to worry where their next tampon pads or reusable is coming from," Monica Lennon, the MSP who introduced the bill, said before the Edinburgh vote.

"Scotland will not be the last country to consign period poverty to history but we have the chance to be the first. "This has been a long time coming."

Sanitary products are free for pupils and students in Scotland, but the bill now places a legal duty on ministers to set up a country-wide scheme to ensure anyone can get access to them.

Schools, colleges and universities must also make a range of period products available for free in their toilets.

Lennon said that while the legislation was "world-leading", schools should also offer education to pupils to end the stigma of periods.

Aileen Campbell, Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government, said the bill sent an "important message about the kind of country we want Scotland to be.

"That is a gender-equal Scotland, where no one has to go through the indignity of using unsuitable materials to mask their periods or stretch household budgets further to buy products for their children, or miss out on education -- a Scotland where no one has to hide a tampon up their sleeve," she said.



Iran's supreme leader has cautioned against hopes of an "opening" with the West, after President Hassan Rouhani's government signalled a readiness to engage with US President-elect Joe Biden. Biden, who defeated Donald Trump at the ballot box on November 3, has promised a return to diplomacy with Iran after four tense years under the hawkish outgoing US president. "We can't trust foreigners and hope for an opening on their part," Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said at a meeting with Rouhani, parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and judicial chief Ebrahim Raisi, according to Khamenei's office. "We tried to lift sanctions once and negotiated for several years, but to no avail," he said in remarks aired on state television, referring to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

O2 supply still not optimised

FROM PAGE 1

hospitals, Dr Farid Hossain Miah, director of hospitals and clinics at the DGHS, said, "We have plans to set up centralised oxygen supply systems. We are working on it.

However, Abu Hena Morshed Zaman, director of central medicine store depot (CMSD), however, said they have sufficient oxygen cylinders in stock even if the number of patients increases.

"If the health directorate cannot set up centralised oxygen system for strategic reasons, then I can say the CMSD is ready to provide support. We have 9,650 cylinders in hand," Zaman, who is also an additional secretary of the government, said.

Experts, however, said, this is futile.

"Cylinders cannot make up for the demand of centralised oxygen systems," Prof Sayedur Rahman, chairman of pharmacology at the BSMMU, told The Daily Star.

Experts have long been stressing the need for uninterrupted oxygen supply at hospitals for critical Covid-19 patients.

Putting emphasis on this, the prime minister on June 2 ordered that intensive care units (ICUs) be set up at all district hospitals.

Subsequently, the health ministry had started taking steps to set up centralised oxygen supply systems at 79 district hospitals.

Nearly five months later when other than the dedicated Covid-19 the top DGHS officials were asked about those hospitals, they evaded the question. At present, 24 dedicated Covid-19 hospitals in the country have centralised oxygen supply systems, according to the latest data from the Management Information System of the DGHS.

SCREENING STILL LAX

Despite some progress, the government is struggling to implement the guideline on ensuring that no passenger is allowed come from a foreign destination without a negative Covid-19 certificate, Dr Shahnila Ferdousi, director of the Center for Disease Control at the DGHS, said while talking about the latest state of screening at the country's entry points.

"We have sent a letter to the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh to ensure that airlines do not carry Covid-19 passengers without certificates, but it is not working.

She also said the screening situation has improved, but there is lots still to

NO PROGRESS ON RAPID ANTIGEN TESTING

Authorities have also failed to announce any hard deadline for introducing the much-talked-about antigen-based rapid testing.

"We will start training staffers to conduct antigen-based rapid testing

from next week and hopefully will be able to introduce rapid testing next month," Prof Meerjady Sabrina Flora, additional director general of the health directorate, told journalists in the meeting. Asked about a specific timeline, she

said, "We cannot say right now."

The DGHS is planning to introduce rapid testing in 10 district headquarters where there are no RT-PCR test facilities, e added.

She also spoke of different technical issues regarding the introduction of rapid testing.

Asked whether necessary antigen kits have been imported, she said, "We have a few and will bring more soon."

The health services division of the health ministry on September 17 approved the antigen rapid testing kit after months of bureaucratic exercises.

Officials in the press meet said the testing protocol for antigen-based rapid tests was awaiting the health ministry's approval. DGHS

Director General Prof ABM Khurshid Alam said, "Taking today's suggestions from journalists into consideration, we will be able to undertake rest of the tasks ahead. We had or have shortcomings in promotional activities; we are trying to move forward. However, you have to come forward too.



GD-1886

Microcredit Regulatory Authority

Gulfeshan Plaza (6th floor), 8 Shahid Sangbadik Selina Pervin Sarak Baro Mogbazar, Ramna, Dhaka-1217 Web:www.mra.gov.bd

Date:- 25 /11/2020

Ref No: 53.04.0000.002.07.002.20-2672

Invitation for e-Tender (Goods)

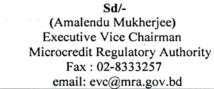
e-tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following goods:

SL	Tender/Proposal	Name of Tender	Tender Document	Tender
No.	ID. No		last selling /	Closing &
			downloading	Opening
			Date and Time	Date and Time
1.	499573	Procurement of Computers and Related	13-December-2020	14-December-
		Accessories/Other Equipment	at 4.00 PM	2020 at 12:00
				PM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tenders, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd). The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited through any registered bank.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and e-GP help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



BOOKS

BOOK REVIEW: NON-FICTION

In 'Azadi', Arundhati Roy explores the many layers of freedom

NAHALY NAFISA KHAN

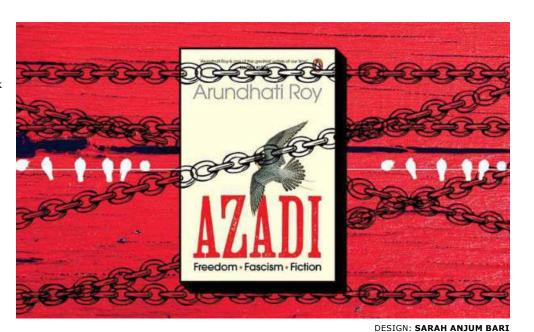
Arundhati Roy's latest, Azadi (Penguin India, 2020), is a collection of nine stand-alone essays, most of which were delivered as lectures or published as columns between 2018 and 2020. Published in early September, the book can be considered a documentation of the ongoing political crises in India, but it also reflects the current socio-political climate of the entire world, in which right-wing ideologies and populism are ever on the rise, and dissent is termed as sedition.

The sections on Indian politics highlight the obliteration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status when articles 370 and 35(A) of the Indian constitution were scrapped, after which Kashmir was driven to a communication lockdown with increased military occupation, and the Modi regime's introduction of the anti-Muslim Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) triggered protests all over India.

In such a world, where the concept and implications of freedom are evolving on a personal and international scale, Roy traces how "azadi"—the Urdu, originally Persian, word for freedom-found its way from the Iranian Revolution to the Kashmiri struggle for freedom and the feminist movement in the Indian subcontinent, and finally to the thousands of Indians protesting on the streets in favour of equal citizenship. And yet, "the Free Virus has made nonsense of international borders, incarcerated whole populations, and brought the modern world to a halt like nothing else ever could. It forces us to question the values we have built our modern societies on," she writes about the COVID-19, in her introduction. Her intention is to point out that even as religious, cultural and nationalistic differences are sought after to

justify segregation, life-through languageoften leaks through barriers, staking its claim in the form of slogans, art, and experiences. And so Roy takes us on her personal

journey through language. She describes how India's political reality shaped her writing of The Ministry of Utmost Happiness (2017), in which the characters all come from diverse backgrounds and dialects, representing pluralism against the very idea of "one nation, one religion, one language" propagated by the current Hindu-nationalist regime.



Talks Back", she writes, "Pakistan, Bangladesh and India are organically connected, socially, culturally, and geographically. Reverse the Hindu nationalists' logic, and imagine how it plays out for the tens of millions of Hindus living in Bangladesh and Pakistan."

In arguing that this common pattern of oppressing minorities was ingrained and strengthened by the blood-stained history of the 1947 partition, she questions whether the narrative of certain Muslims being "Indians by choice" effectively opposes hate-mongering right-wing tendencies, or strengthens the very rhetoric they preach, implying that Muslims have so many homelands, but Hindus have only India. "This plays straight into the binary of the Good Muslim-Bad Muslim, or the Muslim Patriot-Muslim Jihadi, and could inadvertently trap a whole population into having to redeem itself with a lifetime of regular flag-waving and constitution-reading," she writes.

In "Intimations of An Ending", Roy touches upon the NPR-NRC-CAA debate, calling out the current regime boldly for their communal policies and their politics of altering history to spread hate. But she is non-linear in her approach— in "The Language of Literature", she points out that, "The narrative of Kashmir is a jigsaw puzzle whose jagged parts Nahaly Nafisa Khan is sub-editor of Toggle, do not fit together. There is no final picture." The Daily Star and a contributor of Daily In a 2002 speech titled "Come September" Star Books.

collection My Seditious Heart), Roy admitted to the way in which she talks about powerthe paranoia, ruthlessness and physics of it all. In Azadi too, as in her fiction, Arundhati

Roy's writing underlines the importance of specificity, of allowing the reader to look down over a particular issue and notice the power dynamics at play. This enables her as an author to get into the complexities and nuances surrounding an issue, with specific names and dates, with bold opinions, so that readers know exactly what she is talking about and where she stands.

(which was later added to her 2019 essay

Some of the essays in this collection were delivered as lectures and speeches in different parts of the world, as we gather from the footnotes. The variety of locations and platforms indicates how far and wide she has travelled to speak out against political injustices. As a writer and an individual, Roy is wholeheartedly committed to the causes she stands for. Yet her prose is so poetic; it always feels like a conversation, never a monologue. She takes us through the grim realities that we live in, and she ends on a vaguely hopeful note, powered by the conviction, the rage and the pain we must feel within.

BOOK REVIEW: FICTION In 'Pachinko', a Record of Forgotten Lives

SHOAIB ALAM

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2020

AGRAHAYAN 11, 1427 BS

Even in the most extraordinary of political times, someone must tend to the crops. Someone must weave clothes for the winter. These everyday tasks fall not to the revolutionaries who earn our tributes but to ordinary folk persevering through wars and famines without recognition. History, says Min Jin Lee in the opening line of Pachinko, has failed them.

In a sprawling family saga spanning four generations from rural 1910s Korea during Japanese occupation to bullish Japan of the 1980s, Lee offers a corrective. The 20th century's most notable events are footnotes in Pachinko (Grand Central Publishing, 2017). The spotlight is on the people that history has forgotten.

The novel centers on Sunja, the hardworking and illiterate daughter of a Korean boarding-house owner. Just as the Japanese are tightening their grip on the Korean peninsula, two men arrive to disrupt her meagre existence. With yakuza-connections, Hansu brings starry-eyed glamour into Sunja's privations, leaving when she reveals she is with child.

Isak, a kindly pastor, then transports Sunja from the backwaters to Osaka as his wife, saving her from dishonour and making her the Baek family matriarch. In Japan, Isak's idealism and naiveté burrow the family deeper in poverty as they weather the major upheavals of the 20th century, including the atomic bombings of Japan, where at least 40,000 Koreans died.

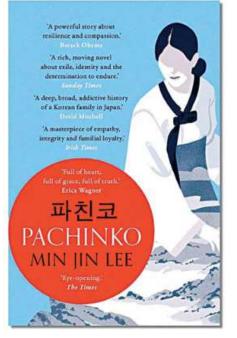
Pachinko's ensemble of immigrant characters brings to light the plight of ethnic Koreans in Japan who migrated or were forcefully brought over between 1910 and 1950. Their descendants, known as the zainichi, continue to face discrimination and social isolation. "This place is only fit for pigs and Koreans," says Isak's older brother, Yoseb, when the couple arrives at the Osaka ghetto they will call home. For a Korean man, the choice is always shit, Yoseb thinks to himself in another moment of reckoning.

The immigrant's ache for dignity and belonging are captured in the family's second generation, Sunja's sons Noa and Mozasu. Each takes a different route through education, wealth, and denial of Korean heritage, only to find the deck stacked impossibly high. By the novel's end, the family has been in Japan for three generations. They are yet to be recognised as Japanese. Change, the novel concedes, takes time.

and elegant in introducing and exiting characters seemingly at will. Her roving omniscient narrator flits between men and women, the rich and the deprived, Japanese and Korean, making every scene intimate and revealing.

The book is not without its clichés. Hansu is somewhat of a contrivance, too, carrying the two halves of the story on his back. But Lee knows how to sharpen the edges of her narrative with an observation, context, or commanding interiority, making familiar moments meaningful. Her careful pacing helps tremendously, slowing down and picking up speed as needed.

This is Lee's second novel, published a decade after her first. In this time she lived in Japan, interviewing Korean-Japanese people there, and wrote multiple drafts for what became Pachinko. Her in-depth research shines through here, giving us an intimate view of the cultural dissonance of contemporary Japan.



For a Bangladeshi reader, Pachinko's key themes of belonging, racism, cultural erasure, and resilience against the odds resonate deeply. We have had our own tormented history with refugees in this country. With a million more joining in recent vears, Pachinko offers a sobering glimpse into what the future might hold.

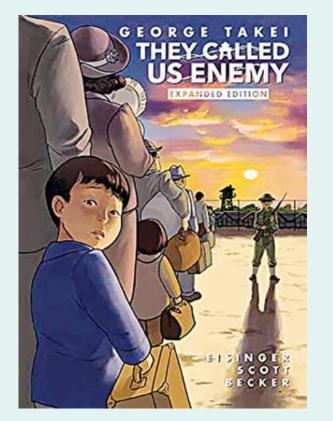
Elsewhere in the book, Roy highlights how the political reality of the subcontinent is interconnected. In the essay, "The Graveyard

Written in the tradition of the 19th century novel, Pachinko is a triumph of interiority. Lee is deft with characterisation

Shoaib Alam is a writer and chief of staff at Teach For Bangladesh.

BOOK REVIEW: GRAPHIC MEMOIR The Trauma of Identity

ISRAR HASAN



George Takei's visceral and heart-wrenching graphic memoir, They Called Us Enemy (2019), dives deep into the cold, dark heart of America's perceived multiculturalism. We follow a four-year-old George and his family as they are forced into concentration camps during WWII-along with 120,000 law-abiding American citizens-because of their Japanese ancestry. In 1942, right after the attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan, President Roosevelt had signed an executive order stating that every person of Japanese descent on the

west coast should be rounded up and shipped to one of ten "relocation centers". This book evokes that history through jarring scenes of dislocation, heartbreak, and violence. In the signing of an order, thousands of children are turned from citizens to enemy "aliens" in a land that they had known to be theirs.

Read this review on The Daily Star website or on fb.com/DailyStar-Books, @thedailystarbooks on Instagram, or @DailyStarBooks on Twitter.

THE BOOK REPORT Into the World of Bengali Literature with Soumitra

RASHEEK TABASSUM MONDIRA

Though both books and films transport us into the world of story-telling, shaping up our perspectives on life, most readers argue that the true essence of a literary work can never be captured in adaptation. Yet sometimes, by the sheer talent of the director and actors, some adaptations succeed in bringing the text to life.

Such was the career of Soumitra Chatterjee, iconic legend of Bengali film, who played more than 300 fictional characters, many of which were based on literary works.

Chatterjee's portrayal of Satyajit Ray's Feluda is undeniably the most significant. Many actors over the years have played the famous detective, but the image of Feluda that readers perceived in their minds fit perfectly only with the version offered by Soumitra.

In the books, Feluda is known for pulling off disguises to catch culprits in their criminal acts-one of the most iconic instances was in Joi Baba Felunath, in which Feluda disguises himself as 'Machli Baba' to take revenge on his arch enemy Maganlal Meghraj in an intense bullet throwing act. This singular act portrays Feluda's sense of accuracy, his sharpness of mind and skills as a gunman, all of which were perfectly reflected in Soumitra's portrayal.

Be it with his intense stare or his bold confidence, Chatterjee's work in Sonar Kella (1974) and Joi Baba Felunath (1979)—both directed by Ray himself—were strong enough

to encourage the author to illustrate the sleuth based on Chatterjee's physique in the later editions.

The Satyajit-Soumitra duo went on to make several other films based on literary works. Charulata (1964), Ghare Baire (1985), and Samapti, all of them written by Rabindranath Tagore, saw Soumitra Chatterjee in lead roles. Based on Tagore's short story,

"Nastanirh", Charulata told the story of Amal and Charu, played by Soumitra and Madhabi Mukherjee. Soumitra's portrayal of Amal, a talented, spontaneous and quirky writer, enchanted the audience as we found ourselves reflected in Amal's conflicting emotions. Amal playing the piano to the tunes of "Ami Chini Go Chini Tomare" combined both Ray and Chatterjee's magic, cement-



ing itself as one of the most iconic scenes in Bengali film history.

Elsewhere in Tapan Singh's Jhinder Bandi (1961)-considered one of the best black and white Bengali films of the time—Soumitra played a villain for the first time in a story inspired by Saradindu Bandyopadhyay's retelling of Anthony Hope's The Prisoner of Zenda.

The ever-smiling Soumitra's portrayal of a cunning and mischievous Mayur-vahan amazed the audience, at a time when the actor was known for his roles as ordinary protagonists. Here, though, his smiles turned into arrogant smirks. During a scene of the King's coronation, Mayur-vahan's boisterous, scornful laughter played a key part in capturing the character's impudence and audacity.

Yet even as he proved his versatility through the negative role, Soumitra continued to dazzle in roles like Sarat Chandra's Devdas (1979), Ajay Kar's Shekhar in Parineeta (1969), and Ashim in Satyajit Ray's Aranyer Din Ratri (1970), based on Sunil Gangopadhyay's novel of the same name.

Soumitra's brilliance as an actor immortalised several iconic literary stories on the silver screen. His honest portrayal of these characters helped connect rich Bengali literature with the growing and thriving world of Bengali cinema-a gift that endures for generations of audiences even as we mourn his loss today.

Rasheek Tabassum Mondira is a contributor.





DHAKA THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2020, AGRAHAYAN 11, 1427 BS

Smuggling amphetamine under the airport authorities' noses

We cannot allow Dhaka to become a drug trafficking route

N a report published in this daily yesterday, it was revealed that a group of chemical traders in Chennai had been smuggling amphetamine from India through Dhaka to several destinations, mostly in Australia and Malaysia, after linking up with some chemical importers at Mitford medicine hub. This smuggling route was operated smoothly by these unscrupulous traders for a year, until 12.32 kg of amphetamine powder was seized from the cargo village area of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on September 9.

It is a huge cause of concern that the banned amphetamine powder, which can be processed into the drug yaba, can be so easily brought into the country under false declaration and without the knowledge of courier companies. Investigations by the Department of Narcotics Control revealed that at least 600 kg of the powder was smuggled out of Bangladesh using courier services after its arrival from India via the Benapole border—a trade worth around Tk 600 crore.

How is it possible that illegal substances worth such a huge sum of money was trafficked, using Bangladesh as the central point of this smuggling route, simply because our airport does not have functioning 3D scanners? While the director of Hazrat Shahjalal Airport said more CCTV cameras and X-ray machines are being installed at the airport, he was unable to specify whether they were the 3D scanners required for detecting drugs, saying only that they are "modern". Such lacklustre responses will not do-the continuous and constant trafficking of illegal goods through our biggest national airport is hugely damaging to our international reputation and merits a firm and immediate response.

We urge the concerned authorities to urgently investigate any airport personnel or employees of the courier services who may have been involved with this smuggling syndicate. The airport authorities must ramp up their security scanning and the courier services must also play their part in ensuring that such illegal trades do not continue. Drug trafficking syndicates are never easy to dismantle, but there must be serious and concerted efforts from all agencies involved to make our borders less porous when it comes to illegal trade. Ultimately, the government needs to follow the money and ensure that the finances for these illegal substances are cut off at the source.

Bangladesh bottom-ranked in Mastercard Index of Women **Entrepreneurs!**

Why are so many children still dying of pneumonia?

It is a preventable disease and can be treated with low cost

T is hard to believe that three children still die of pneumonia every hour in Bangladesh, according to a recent Prothom Alo report. Pneumonia is still one of the major causes of

child deaths in the country, despite the government's vaccine coverage being more than satisfactory—the current vaccination rate for pneumonia is 97 percent.

Naznin Tithi

The WHO estimates that every year around 8 lakh children die of pneumonia across the world, 90 percent of them in the African and South Asian countries. While most deaths occur among children under the age of two, around 153,000 children die within the first month of their life. Such a high number of deaths from this disease is particularly shocking because it is preventable with vaccines and treatable with low-cost medicines.

Studies have revealed that child deaths from pneumonia are not decreasing at the expected rate in Bangladesh. According to the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2017-2018, child deaths from pneumonia was 12 per 1,000 live births in 2011, and currently it is eight among 1,000 live births.

So unless we take extreme measures to reduce pneumonia-related child deaths, it would be impossible for us to bring down our overall child mortality rate. With such a high number of children dying of a preventable disease every year, achieving the SDG goal 3.2 by 2030 (bringing down the child mortality rate to as low as 2.5 percent) will also remain a distant dream for us.

Now, the question is, why are we failing to prevent these deaths despite having a good vaccination coverage against pneumonia? According to Dr Sabbir Ahmed, Advisor, Pneumonia Centenary Commitment, Save the Children in Bangladesh, "the Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV), which is included in the EPI programme and is widely given to our children, has a good vaccine coverage, but it only protects children from the leading bacterial cause of pneumonia-pneumococcus, while various other organisms may also cause pneumonia either singly or in combination."

So, how do we prevent other organisms from causing the disease? Samir Kumar Saha, executive director at Child Health Research Foundation, says, "We do not know whether an infection is caused by a

virus or a bacterium. We need to conduct research to know it, but sadly, no research initiatives have been taken so far to understand this." (Prothom Alo, November 12, 2020)

If we still cannot tell which germ is causing the infection in children, how can they be treated? Where is the research to find out the reasons behind such high prevalence of pneumonia in our children? Our health budget being so low, research activities seem to be out of the consideration of the government. This has to change. When our children are dying from preventable diseases, we need to know why and we need to find a way to save them at all costs.

Then comes the question of treatment: why can't our hospitals provide proper treatment to pneumonia-infected children? Apparently, most of the

it's too late. According to an icddr,b study, 52 percent of children who die of pneumonia are never taken to any hospital. While 45 percent of them die at healthcare centres, three percent die after being treated at home. What this means is, more information about preventing pneumonia should be made available to people in rural areas.

At the beginning of this pandemic, another problem faced by our hospitals and health complexes was revealed: the absence of an oxygen supply system. It was revealed at that time that not only the hospitals at the upazila level but a majority of hospitals at the district level also did not have any oxygen supply system. We learned that the government had taken some initiatives to address the issue but we do not have any updated information on this. Needless to say, all



When our children die from preventable diseases, we need to know why and we need to find a way to save them at all costs.

hospitals are not even properly equipped for childcare. According to the Bangladesh Health Facility Survey 2017, 95 percent of hospitals and healthcare institutions in the country do not have all of the 10 basic instruments required to treat children, as suggested by the WHO. These include the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) guideline, staffers trained under the guideline, child scale, thermometer, growth chart, medicine, ORS, zinc tablets/syrup, amoxicillin syrup/suspension, and mebendazole. When hospitals do not even have these basic tools, how can we expect them to provide treatment for pneumonia?

Early diagnosis is crucial to prevent pneumonia in children. But parents, particularly in rural areas, have very little idea about the disease and so they often take their children to the hospital when

the government health facilities must have uninterrupted oxygen supply to treat both children and adults for pneumonia and other respiratory diseases.

PHOTO: ICDDR,B

Unfortunately, no matter how hard we try to eliminate pneumonia through vaccination and treatment, children will still be prone to catching the disease if they remain malnourished. Lack of proper nutrition is a big issue in fighting pneumonia and other deadly diseases in under-five children. Thus, besides ensuring high coverage of vaccines and timely treatment at the community level, we need to encourage exclusive breastfeeding of children for six months. Taking appropriate complimentary infant and young children feeding programmes is similarly important to fight malnutrition, thereby reducing their chances of developing pneumonia.

Early diagnosis is crucial to prevent pneumonia in children. But parents, *particularly in rural* areas, have very little idea about the disease and so they often take their children to the hospital when it's too late.

We also need to give more focus on maternal health. The nutritional needs of the expectant mothers should be met properly for the wellbeing of both the mother and the child. A malnourished mother cannot give birth to a heathy child. Women living in the villages and the remote areas should have access to proper antenatal care.

It must also be mentioned here that the deteriorating air quality in Bangladesh, especially in the capital, is greatly contributing to children developing pneumonia and other air-borne respiratory diseases. In the rural areas, the fumes created by traditional cooking practices in the households contribute a lot to air pollution, which affect children the most. In order to reduce air pollution in and around the capital, the illegal brick kilns on the outskirts of the city must be shut immediately, as directed by the HC. Other factors contributing to air pollution, such as construction dust, chemicals emitted from vehicles, open burning of solid waste and chemicals, etc., must also be checked. And to improve the air quality in the rural areas, people must be made aware of air pollution and have access to clean and safe fuel for cooking. With improved air quality, the onslaught of pneumonia in children will surely lessen.

A recent report by Save the Children and Johns Hopkins University highlighted the need for more collaborative efforts to fight pneumonia. It said that nearly 140,000 child deaths from pneumonia and other related diseases could be averted in Bangladesh over the next ten years with well-coordinated efforts. Will we act now?

Naznin Tithi is a member of the editorial team at The Daily Star

Access to loan and leadership skills training is needed

T E are shocked to learn that Bangladesh has bottom-ranked among 58 economies in the Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs for 2020, meaning that women entrepreneurs here face the toughest of challenges in doing business. Bangladesh scored 36.4 out of 100 points in the index, while our neighbouring country India scored 50.99 points. The ranking is done based on an analysis of 12 indicators and 25 sub-indicators spanning advancement outcomes, knowledge assets and financial access, and supporting entrepreneurial conditions, according to Mastercard, a global technology company in the payments industry. They mentioned in their report that women entrepreneurs in the economies with the lowest scores "continue to be held back by deeply rooted socio-cultural as well as economic and financial constraints such as lack of work opportunities, government support, and access to funding and capital."

While women in business are progressing globally, it is most unfortunate that Bangladeshi women entrepreneurs are still facing so many constraints in doing business. They are economically marginalised and few of them have tertiary-level education. Their access to government support and funding is also very limited. Moreover, our general social values also stand against women wanting to pursue business as a profession. Women have to overcome all these challenges in order to do business, which their male counterparts hardly face.

While women's representation in the business and economic landscape remains low compared to men across the regions, especially in terms of business leadership, the situation is particularly bad in Bangladesh. There are only a handful of business leaders in the country who are women because many women do not have access to the necessary support mechanisms to prove their potential in becoming a business leader. Access to capital is a major constraint for women entrepreneurs.

We need women-friendly business policies to change this situation. The social and economic barriers faced by our women who want to become business entrepreneurs should be removed by providing them with necessary funding and training, and also by raising awareness to change the negative attitudes towards a woman trying to set up a business. We know that the government provides loans to women trying to set up small and medium businesses. However, women face many challenges in the process of getting the loan starting from writing the application. So, the process of getting SME loans should be made easy for them. Besides, private organisations should also come forward in providing women the support they need to become entrepreneurs.



PROJECT SYNDICATE Protecting child workers during the pandemic

T is already apparent that the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will be uneven, with poorer countries bearing the brunt of the fallout. This includes the 1.2

million children

in Bangladesh who are engaged in the harshest forms of child labour. In such uncertain times, these children—and millions of others elsewhere-are even more vulnerable to exploitative and hazardous work.

The reason is simple. When major global retail outlets cancelled orders due to lockdown-related cutbacks, the production of low-cost fashion in much of the world came to a standstill, leaving many garment workers in the Global South without an income. Since March, Bangladesh's exports of leather goods have declined by 22 percent. The country's footwear-manufacturing industry, the world's eighth largest, has also been affected, with exports down by 50 percent since the pandemic began.

With leather-goods producers facing cancelled orders and restrictions to slow the transmission of Covid-19, the unregulated informal sector has become much more competitive, with factory owners targeting children as cheap labour. In the informal leather sector, children often work long hours for little or no pay, frequently doing work that is physically and psychologically harmful and dangerous jobs during the production process. But despite the risks, most children rely on such employment to support themselves and their families.

Now, tanneries are slowly resuming production, and raw materials are being channelled to factories filling new international orders, leading to a relative scarcity of materials for domestic production. This creates another opening for leather producers in the unregulated

informal sector. Their ability to step in to meet domestic demand depends on further exploitations of children.

Bangladesh does have laws and policies to address hazardous and exploitative child labour. But policy gaps exist-the Bangladesh Labour Act, for example, does not cover the informal sector.

Here, international brands and corporations have an opportunity to help. conditions. And a transparent system is needed for tracking the sources of raw materials and ensuring that children are not used in bonded labour or working in hazardous conditions.

While plenty of initiatives to protect child workers have been undertaken in recent decades, they often fall short. Tracking the long supply chain is difficult, so a culture of violence at its origin persists, sustained by structural



File photo of children at work in a hazardous condition.

Global retail outlets must recognise not only the immediate financial impact of cancelling orders, but also the unintended consequences for both the formal and informal sectors.

This means approaching the problem holistically, with established brands and their customers being well informed about where, how, and by whom goods are produced. Brands need to take responsibility for ensuring ethical behaviour throughout their supply chain. Stricter monitoring is necessary to guarantee that all suppliers, international and local, meet the same standards in terms of labour codes and working

inequalities that constant global demand for cheap products embeds in the production process.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Having to comply with a monitoring regime would prevent suppliers from subcontracting their work to informal, often unregulated companies in which workers, including many children, labour in harmful and hazardous conditions. Responsible brands could also implement the "positive deviance" approach, publicly sharing their ethical business strategies and practices, which may encourage other brands to investigate their own practices in turn

Furthermore, relevant government

agencies, civil-society groups, and private-sector organisations must focus on enforcing existing policies and protecting children's rights. Both international and local brands need to be held accountable regarding their duty to care for children. All businesses should adhere to a minimum-age requirement, maintain standard working hours, and guarantee safe workplace conditions. To ensure compliance, businesses employing children must have a multi-stakeholder consultation system in place, including representatives from the government, civil society, human-rights organisations, and academia, as well as social workers.

Finally, to protect children from harmful work and modern slavery in industries like leather goods requires listening to children themselves. Children are rarely involved in workplace decisionmaking, especially during shocks like the Covid-19 pandemic, when they are more likely to be subjected to hazardous conditions. Learning from them about their experiences at all stages of the production process can be pivotal in improving their well-being.

The pandemic has exposed the intricacies of global supply chains and the vulnerability of the people working within them. Even in normal times, children are vulnerable to exploitation by unregulated, informal firms, which will pick up business where other firms cannot. But now this risk is greater than ever.

Understanding global supply chains and the impact of sudden changes on the vulnerable people who form their links is crucial. Advocates and policymakers must devise and implement robust accountability systems to uphold the rights of the millions of children-in Bangladesh and globally-who must work.

Jiniva Afroze is Country Coordinator for Bangladesh at the Child Labour: Action-Research-Innovat in South and South-Eastern Asia (CLARISSA) consortium

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16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Sexual violence is an emblem of patriarchy in the guise of tradition



Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (Banbeis) report from last year suggests that in 2018, girls

formed 54 percent of the total number of students at the secondary level. In 1999, it was 43 percent. In another indicator of progress in women's life, maternal mortality has also reduced significantly. According to World Bank, the country's maternal mortality was 434 per 100,000 live births in 2000, which plummeted to 173 per 100,000 live births in 2017. The World Bank data further indicated improvements in female labour force participation, which in 2020 stands at 36.42 percent, up from 24.73 percent in 1990.

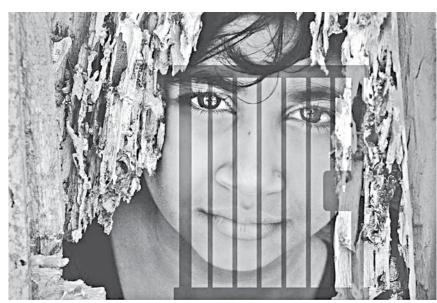
While these are successes worth acknowledging, our development is severely hampered by violence against women and girls, especially sexual violence, which has intensified in recent times. According to an estimate of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP), sexual violence against women doubled between 2010 and 2019. Let's take the number of rape incidents for example: in 2010, the number stood at 940, which more than doubled to 1855 in 2019. Rape is just one of the many forms of sexual violence women and children are forced to endure every day

Marital rape, meanwhile, is an unacknowledged form of sexual violence unleashed on women, and unfortunately on girls too. Hundreds and thousands of women are forced to endure rape by their own husbands. And why? Because Section 375 of the Penal Code states, "Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife

not being under 13 years of age, is not consent is alien. rape.'

But why would a girl be married at 13 in the first place? "... if a marriage is solemnised in such a manner and under such special circumstances as may be prescribed by rules in the best interests of the minor, at the directions of the court and with consent of the parents or the guardian of the minor, as the case may be, it shall not be

Often these young girls are subjected to forced coitus and sexual perversions, leading to significant damage to their reproductive health, not to mention the mental trauma they endure. The tragic story of 14-year-old Nurnahar, who died in October this year, after suffering from gynaecological complications following sexual intercourse with her 34-year-old husband and subsequent



To truly end sexual violence against women and girls, we have to break the cycle of patriarchy masquerading as tradition.

deemed to be an offence under this act." This is clearly stated in Section 19 of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, which fails to specify which scenarios qualify as "special circumstances." So, with no clear indication on what special circumstances mean, our girls remain vulnerable to the curse of child marriage and sexual exploitation at the hands of their husbands, who have been taught that wives are their possessions to do with them as they please, and to whom the concept of

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

lack of treatment, is a case in point. When the teenager reported that she was suffering from genital bleeding, instead of immediately consulting a gynaecologist, the husband kept having sex with her, causing injury and agonising pain. She was given medicine from a local kabiraj, and only when it was too late did the family decide to seek medical help. The girl succumbed to her injuries. The mother-in-law suggested that she was possessed by demonic spirits which caused the

bleeding. Despite being a womanwho must have understood what the little girl would have endured-the mother-in-law chose to overlook Nurnahar's trauma, and instead blamed her for her misfortune. Although the girl's family has reportedly filed a complaint with the local police station, chances of justice being served in this case are slim. She was 14 after allmeaning she wasn't raped by legal definition, even if she was.

There are men—fathers, brothers, uncles, grandfathers, in-laws, cousins, friends, acquaintances, strangerswho inflict sexual violence on girls and women every day. And then there are women—mothers, sisters, aunties, grandmothers, female relatives and friends-who discourage other women and girls from raising their voice against such brutality. It is this systematic suppression of women's voices by their own family and close associates, and sometimes by other women, that is emboldening the perpetrators of sexual violence.

The archaic and myopic definition of rape remains another major enabler of this heinous crime. The definition of rape in our law is confined to penile-vaginal penetration. So, if a man forcefully inserts an object into a woman through the vaginal opening, it would not be considered rape, because it has not been a penile penetration. But we have seen incidents of women being subjected to sexual abuse with objects. And how are those cases classified?

Although the government has increased the highest punishment for rape to the death penalty, it is not expected to result in significant change, as the rate of disposal of rape cases remains extremely low. An Amnesty International report citing data from the government's One Stop Crisis Centre suggests that between 2001 and July 2020, only 3.56 percent of cases filed under the Women and Children

Repression Prevention Act 2000 have resulted in a court judgment, and only 0.37 percent of cases have ended with convictions. The Amnesty International report further added, "Local women's rights organisation Naripokkho examined the incidents of reported rape cases in six districts between 2011 and 2018 and found that out of 4,372 cases, only five people were convicted."

While these statistics and realities portray the problems that are enabling sexual violence against women, the bigger problem lies in our perspective.

Sexual violence against women is symptomatic of a patriarchal society refusing to act in its best interest. It is happening because of a lack of empowerment, because in an equitable society, this cannot happen. We are living in a society that, unfortunately, still sees a woman as an object that can be dominated, sexually and otherwise. And it is through this sexual dominance over women that the men in our country portray their power and ego.

And this should be a major concern for the policymakers, because this is a reflection of a fundamental disequilibrium: women's empowerment. The ties between economic growth and women's empowerment merits broader discussion, but suffice it to say, their connection is well-established. If we cannot empower women with sovereignty over their own bodies, how do we hope to give them control over their own destiny and that of the nation?

To truly end sexual violence against women, we have to break the cycle of patriarchy masquerading as tradition. We have to rise above the petty urge of the ego that wants to dominate, not just for vanity or the slogan of an equitable society, but for our own growth as a nation.

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

What does a stable sovereign credit rating mean for Bangladesh?

MD ABDUL WASI

N November 11, Fitch Ratings, a highly reputed international credit rating agency, affirmed a

not considerably high when compared to other sovereign ratings globally. This argument is consistent; however, a relatively low rating is also expected in developing countries. A more

the same rating as the sovereign are also unlikely to undergo a downgrade in their ratings, which can be important for their local and foreign business activities, unless their fundamentals

Bangladesh experienced the highest GDP growth rate in 2018 and 2019 amongst all the other countries that are included in the comparative economic forecasts data for South Asia. Therefore,

pandemic has adversely affected all economies. Thereby, one can expect a similar negative impact on our economy as well. While it is true that a number of businesses have been affected, the current stable (unchanged) status of our sovereign ratings also signifies the overall fiscal strength that our domestic economy has gained over time. This is further

stable outlook on the sovereign credit rating of Bangladesh. At the same time, other nations in South Asia, specifically those that have comparable economic conditions, have either received a negative outlook or remained at a lower rating than us, as shown by Fitch. Therefore, it raises the question of whether we fared better under the current global pandemic conditions relative to other neighbouring nations.

In line with the opinion of this global rating agency, one can say that we have been successful, to a large extent, in maintaining our economic progress. To briefly explain, a credit rating is an assessment of the creditworthiness of a borrower (in this case a sovereign nation). Maintaining a stable outlook, particularly in the Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) of the sovereign, speaks to the resilience of its external finances and insignificant changes to the government debt quality. While we have received similar ratings in the past few years, maintaining the same stable outlook during the ongoing global pandemic is a noteworthy outcome.

In hindsight, one can argue that although we have maintained a stable outlook, the sovereign rating itself is

QUOTABLE

important aspect in this analysis would be the change in ratings (i.e. the second order effect) around the negative macroeconomic shock induced by Covid-19. Contrary to the general expectation, based on the current stable rating outlook, we can infer that the quality of our sovereign debt has not deteriorated during the pandemic. This finding, thereby, can have potentially important implications for the broader economy as an unchanged sovereign rating can help maintain investor confidence in our sovereign debt instruments.

Another noteworthy aspect of this latest rating outlook is that our country ceiling of the ratings has also remained unchanged. This is an important phenomenon because, generally, rating agencies tend to apply a sovereign ceiling doctrine whereby during a sovereign downgrade, firms that have the same rating as the sovereign are also downgraded. This exercise is done to ensure that the ratings of the firms within the domestic economy do not pierce the sovereign rating ceiling. Therefore, given the stable sovereign rating outlook, our presumably large domestic firms (including banks and other state-owned entities) that have

decline

To rationalise the stable rating outlook, we can utilise the GDP forecasts by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the current year of 2020. In the month of June, ADB had forecasted a positive GDP growth for Bangladesh, whereas there was a negative forecast for most other countries in ADB's comparative economic forecasts for South Asia. Today, a few months later and almost towards the end of the year, Bangladesh is in the leading position in terms of the GDP growth rate forecasts for 2020 relative to all other countries that are included in these comparative economic forecasts. This evidence lends support to the notion that despite bearing the brunt of the economic slowdown triggered by the global pandemic during the second and third quarters of the year, our GDP growth forecasts still materialise. Again, this is a considerable result, especially as other countries in South Asia face more difficulty in dealing with the economic impact of this ongoing pandemic.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that this trajectory of the GDP growth is not for the current year exclusively. The data from the ADB suggests that

it is evident that our economic growth has been sustainable, and this is probably the reason why we have been able to relatively absorb the shock caused by the current global pandemic. Furthermore, I do acknowledge the health concerns and the economic losses faced by various members of the society because of this pandemic. However, this is also a global crisis and, as we know, best efforts are being made to resolve it.

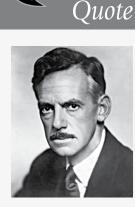
Finally, a small anecdote can shed further light on our discussion above. Fitch Ratings has downgraded the credit rating of South Africa on November 20, 2020. This is mainly due to the impact of the pandemic on the country's economy and, surprisingly, this rating is now equal to that of Bangladesh. These two countries are at different stages of economic development, where South Africa is more developed; nonetheless, their ratings are currently on a par. This anecdote highlights how the pandemic has hurt all economies, even more developed ones, and therefore our economy's resilience under such dire economic conditions further substantiates the positive economic outlook

In summary, the current global

This finding, thereby, can have potentially important implications for the broader economy as an unchanged sovereign rating can help maintain investor confidence in our sovereign debt instruments.

emphasised by the positive trend in the economic indicators, for example the GDP growth rate shown by international organisations such as the ADB. Hence, while our goal is to work towards further development, it may be worthwhile to incorporate the indications that we receive from reputable global agencies about our economy in this process.

Md Abdul Wasi is a lecturer of finance at North South University in Dhaka (currently on leave).



EUGENE O'NEILL (1888-1953) American dramatist.

God gave us mouths that close and ears that don't... that should tell us something.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH							
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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

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WATER POLICY AND PUBLIC RIGHTS

The Daily Star, Nijera Kori and ICCO Cooperation jointly organised an online discussion titled "Water Policy and Public Rights" on October 27, 2020. Here we publish a summary of the discussion.



TANJIM FERDOUS National Consultant, United Nations in Bangladesh and Moderator of the

The rural population in our country have been facing various issues in regards to the accessibility of water. Our discussion today will bring attention to these issues related to the management of the water bodies in the rural areas and its effects on our marginalised population.



KHUSHI KABIR Coordinator, Nijera Kori

Water is an essential resource for every living being. Bangladeshi culture is also highly interspersed around water with most of our famous songs and poems being written about them.

In the past, ponds played a huge role in rural life and every house in a village had an attached pond. The presence of these ponds was a necessity but along with that, they also had a social role to play. The purpose of these ponds ranged from being a supply of fresh water for a household to fish farming. Overall, our rural society had a working system for supplying themselves with water. This system was disrupted as we started to implement development projects without considering their effects on the marginalised population. The ponds that used to supply drinking water began to be used for fish farming which forced the women to walk long distances to fetch drinking water.

Accessibility is another issue that is affecting our rural population. All policies should be made keeping the needs of the people in mind. In 2010, the United Nations officially accepted the right to safe drinking water as a basic human right. We must divert our focus from individual economic development and consider the

landless and only have this beel for water, people do not care about us.



SUMITRA RANI Saghata, Gaibandha

Beel Bosta is a large beel. It has nine sections. The influential people take possession of the Jalmahal (open water bodies). The fishermen are left helpless. The fishermen are living in a dire situation. Our children are not receiving education, there is a shortage of food, and there is no proper healthcare. My demand to the government is that the Jalmahal be given to the fishermen and their families.



RAHMAT ALI Raiganj, Sirajganj

Illegal occupation of water bodies is a major concern. The community in Raiganj is dependent on the Sonadanga Beel for their livelihoods but illegal occupants of this Beel are constantly terrorising us. When our beel was grabbed, we went to government offices and found out that 85 bighas of the beel were government khas land. The grabbers had made fake papers to occupy the land. Nijera Kori has helped us immensely in our legal fight to win back this water body.



of 14.4 million hectares. About 25 percent of the water required for irrigation comes from rivers, canals, and other reservoirs. 16.2 million farmers depend on wetlands

and 12.68 percent of our GDP comes from agriculture. For the people of Bangladesh, proper access to river water is crucial for their survival because fish provides 60 percent of the animal protein intake in Bangladesh. According to article 18(A) of our constitution, the state shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to preserve and safeguard the natural resources, biodiversity, wetlands, forests, and wildlife for the present and future citizens. On the other hand, article 14 covers the protection of our workers and article 16 covers rural development related issues. The provisions of our basic necessities are discussed in article 15.

At first glance, it may seem that the people of Bangladesh have no shortage of water. The per capita availability of water in our country is 7,568 cubic metres which is much higher in comparison to our neighbouring countries. But, the problem lies in the fact that not every citizen has equal access to this resource.

The National Water Policy (NWP), 1999 addresses some of the crucial challenges faced in relation to water management. Some of the topics covered by this policy include accessibility of water, users' responsibility, siltation and erosion, deterioration of water quality, decentralisation, and privatisation. Apart from the NWP, we have various other policies for water management. These include National Shrimp Policy, 2014; National Policy for Safe Water Supply and Sanitation, 1998; National Water Management Plan, 2001; and so on. According to the policies, water management must be decentralised. But, in reality there is no decentralisation. There is also no representation of women in the committees.

Four villages under Chattogram's Potia Upazila are running dry as groundwater is becoming depleted due to extraction by eight intensive industries. These industries include bottled water industries, food processing industries, textile industries, and many others. 350 tube wells set up by the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) had no water. Four canals have been polluted by these industries, most of which do not have an Effluent Treatment

we are also indifferent towards marine fisheries.

So far, no initiative has been taken to strengthen our institutions and the UN Convention has still not been signed. The sustainability of our development projects has been grossly undermined because of all the things we have left incomplete.

The government has still not been able to resolve waterlogging issues despite the public informing them of potential solutions. Every three years, Bhabadaha suffers from severe waterlogging. Bhabadaha's example shows how appalling the state of Bangladesh's water management is. This dire state leaves the commitment to public rights unfulfilled and is grossly inadequate.



TANZIMUDDIN KHAN Professor. Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, Dhaka University

There is no shortage of laws for the management of water resources in the country. The main issue lies in governance. There have been major shifts in water resource management after the NWP was enacted since it included the factor of governance issues. It must be recognised that the state is the custodian of the general public, and the people have a right to water as a resource. We have to rely on different water sources and a freshwater ecosystem, to ensure access to water. Clear policies are required on what the role of the government is in this regard. Water governance is not separate from state governance. If the state is undemocratic and tries to escape accountability, it cannot protect the rights of its people. The existing laws will only be implemented when the state recognises the general people as a part of them. Therefore, the state requires structural change. The only way to ensure access to water for all is for the state to recognise the rights of the underprivileged and poverty-stricken population. Positive discrimination is necessary for those who are not empowered.

The UN Convention on watercourses of 1997 is essential to us since we are a lower



MANISULISLAM Director, Center for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS)

Water can be viewed in various ways - water for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), water for ecosystems and so on. We have been working to establish a law for wetland sanctuaries, but to no avail. However, the government has announced some sanctuaries through a standing order, which is a step in the right direction.

There is an issue with freshwater in the periphery of the Sundarbans where some canals and rivers are leased. These can be freed from the lessees through the collective efforts of the local government and people.

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) has taken up many renovation projects and has been constructing new dams. Coastal Embankment Improvement Project Phase 1 (CEIP-1) is a project they have been working on with the support of the World Bank. This project is focused on creating polders and improving irrigation & drainage systems. The aspect of participation from the general public through water management groups and association is included in this project. The recommendations from the public will be used to improve the irrigation & drainage systems. Unfortunately, the involvement of the public was initiated 2.5 years after the project began. In the meantime, all the necessary structures have already been made. Therefore, there was no input from the local people when creating these structures. If we look at the macro plan, there is scope for many micro-level plans such as mitigation of waterlogging, expanding agricultural land, increasing cropping intensity and many more. However, these plans are no longer been accepted since the structures have already been established. This means there are flaws in the process and in the policies as well. These loopholes are being misused during implementation. A proper governance and accountability instrument would be helpful in this regard. The Government Jalmahal Management Policy, 2009 does not have a proper definition for fisher. It stated that whoever owned fishnets was a fisher, However, during the monsoon, 90 percent of families in rural setting have fishnets. They cannot all be fisher. The second issue with policy is that, even though we are trying to give fisher the responsibility for Jalmahal management, the process is not inclusive. Poor fisher cannot afford the eight to 12 lakh taka of leasing money that is required. There are also yearly management costs of around 50 to 80 lakh taka. These payments have to be made up front. This is not at all feasible for fish farmers in Bangladesh.

development of the population as a whole to ensure that no one is left behind.

The aspects of governance and accountability need more focus. Privatisation of water will not help the people but will instead cause more suffering, and damage the environment. The balance in our environment has been lost mainly due to privatisation. We need to reiterate clearly that having access to water is a basic right.



MD AZIZAR RAHMAN Pirganj, Rangpur

The environment of Bamnir beel is good for people's health. No matter how hard a person works, they can come here afterwards and breathe in the fresh air to feel refreshed. Nobody wishes to leave this place. We have big dreams for this place, which is why we are working tirelessly on many initiatives for the area. If the canal in this area was flowing, then thousands of tonnes of paddy could have been cultivated. We have fish in excess here; even fishermen from neighbouring villages come to catch fish from this beel.



ASHRAF ALI Pirganj, Rangpur

A canal nearby was closed down recently. This has caused us quite a lot of damage. Some of us formed groups and then issued a statement against this. The canal being shut down has led to the water flow in this beel being disrupted. The crops of at least 1,521 acres of land have been destroyed. We appealed to the government to get the papers for the land. Officials assured us they would fix the issues soon, but nothing has been done yet. The honourable MP did not do anything either. Since we are

Dumuria, Khulna

The Bhadra River is connected with about 22 villages and the people in these villages use the river for fish farming. Some influential people got a lease of this river and started polluting it by constructing a dam. We grew up catching fish and picking water lilies and vegetables out of the river, but the water smells too foul for any of that now. We have protested many times and demanded action from the government, but instead, we were charged with lawsuits.



SYEDA RIZWANA HASAN Director, BELA

"Water Policy and Public Rights" constitutes access to safe water for the public and it is a collective right. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 states that we must ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. We are aware that the UN has two covenants. The articles 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights cover the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. In 2002, the UN recognised that the right to water itself is an independent right since it is one of the most fundamental conditions for survival.

In Costa Rica, the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court declared a constitutional right to drinking water, building on the right to health, life, a clean environment, food, and decent living conditions. The article 27 of the South African Constitution states that "Everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water." In accordance with resolution 64/292, the United Nations General Assembly explicitly recognises the human right to water and sanitation and acknowledges that clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realisation of all human rights.

Bangladesh is a land of rivers. It is situated at the confluence of the three major rivers, Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna. Together these rivers cover an area RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognise access to water as a constitutional right

Decentralise the water management system

>Create a proper governance and accountability mechanism for water management

> Ensure participation of women and other marginalised groups in water management

Stop privatisation of water

Discourage distribution and use of bottled water

Regulate the leasing policies of water bodies by law

Ratify the UN Convention on International Watercourse 1997

Plant (ETP). A case was filed for this under the Water Act, 2013, but despite repeated orders, the government failed to provide information regarding the status of groundwater.

Despite multiple policies and laws, our water bodies are still consistently getting polluted and the citizens are forced to utilise the dirty water for their daily needs. 17 percent of agricultural land has been allocated for saltwater shrimp farming without any environmental impact studies being conducted.

We have a constitutional basis to acknowledge the right to water as a public right. Our present legal and policy recognition in favour of water is quite limited. Furthermore, the entire water management system is highly centralised consisting of negligible female representation. As a result, this management system cannot be considered pro-people. We also lack various legal and policy-related safeguards that could eliminate the possible barriers to accessibility. We are often faced with accessibility issues that arise due to unavailability, depletion, pollution, and contamination of water; and this access is inequitable. Compliance with standards is never monitored.

Leasing policies in Bangladesh are not regulated by law and this creates a huge gap since policies are not enforceable. We do not have any criteria for objective Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) or Social Impact Assessments (SIA). Moreover,

riparian state. Yet, our country has still not ratified this convention. Since we are a lower riparian country, we have to rely on neighbouring countries for access to water. The state must ensure that we receive a steady flow of water from the neighbouring countries, and this should also be included in policies.

A major limitation of integrated water management system is that we do not take into account the fact that groundwater, surface water, or rainwater management are all different. The context of various spatial features is not considered when planning for integrated water management. Categorisation should be done during planning.

In the manufacturing process of bottled water, three litres of water are required to produce a one-litre bottle. Therefore, the distribution and use of bottled water should not be encouraged.

Rivers should be given due importance when it comes to water resource management. There is a 2016 High Court ruling which recognises rivers as living beings. This recognition should be reflected in water policies. There has been a trend of privatisation of water in Bangladesh. Many different countries, such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Bolivia, have been trying to do the same since the mid-1990s. All of these countries failed to privatise water and ultimately bestowed the responsibility of water management upon the government. Bangladesh must learn from their experiences.



SHAMSUL HUDA Executive Director, Association of Land Reform and Development (ALRD)

Access to water is a fundamental human right. Many countries have recognised it as a constitutional right, but Bangladesh has yet to do so. We have extensive water polices and but their implementation is very poor. A basic reason for this is that the policies are created by government officials and there is a culture of prejudice. We require an all-encompassing water policy that takes into account the diversity in our water bodies. Specific policies are also necessary for particular regions based on the unique features of their water bodies. Every policy should include a safety clause as well. We should create a database consisting of information regarding specific regions and their water bodies along with an account of the number of livelihoods dependent on those water bodies. Every process should be transparent and have scope for accountability.

Most of our water bodies come from external sources and we are not properly receiving water from these sources due to certain discrepancies. We cannot expect to establish our rights on these water sources until we start to fix our own management system and put an end to the misuse of water.

e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net DHAKA THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2020, AGRAHAYAN 11, 1427 BS

HAT TO WATCH **T SPORTS** Bangabandhu T20 Cup Khulna v Rajshahi Live from 1:30pm Chattogram v Dhaka Live from 6:30pm UEFA Europa League Lille v AC Milan

Live from 11:55pm Rangers v Benfica Live from 2:00am (Friday) TEN 2 UEFA Europa League CSKA-Sofia v Young Boys Live from 11:55pm Napoli v Rijeka Live from 2:00am (Friday)

SONY SIX Lanka Premier League Colombo Kings v Kandy Tuskers Live from 8:00pm UEFA Europa League Cluj v AS Roma Live from 2:00am (Friday)

TOUCHED by the hand of God

SAMAMA RAHMAN

"I am black or white. I'll never be grey in my life."

grey in my life." Among the many observations that the world made about Diego Maradona, the one spoken by the man himself may hold truest. He scored the winner with the most beautiful goal in World Cup history in the 1986 semifinal against England, but scored the equaliser minutes earlier with what he famously described as: "a little with the head of Maradona, and a little with the hand of God". After reaching dizzying

reaching dizzying After heights as a youngster in South America, he moved to Barcelona for a world record fee in 1982. But after suffering a broken ankle

cities in Europe at the time and in the middle of a financial crisis. When asked what he expected, he replied: "Peace. The peace that I never had at Barcelona. And, above all, respect." The locals, who were said to have loved Napoli more than

have loved Napoli more than their children, welcomed the most expensive player in the world with aplomb and a team that had never won Serie A would claim it twice, adding a Coppa Italia and a UEFA Super Cup by 1990.

When Maradona's love for the excess saw him become close to the boss of the Comorra crime family, Carmine Giuliano, Naples did not bat an eye. His in Italy, eliminating the hosts in an air rifle outside his home in the comificale and fueling the Buenos Aires at journalists and



cocaine addiction would also the semifinals and fueling the Buenos Aires at journalists and

His managerial career was as colourful and eventful as his playing days, with trips to Mexico, UAE and even a change at managing the La Albiceleste at the 2010 World Cup. His friends included everyone from Freddie Mercury to Fidel Castro to Magic Johnson. A running war-of-words with Pele and his antics at the 2018 World Cup in Russia will also remain highlights.

Pochettino, Mauricio youngster rooming with Maradona at the time of his attack on the journos, maintains: "I promise you, if he arrived here and opened the door we'd all be

in love with him." For all of the times that he has let the world down, his charm







PHOTO: AFP/REUTERS/TWITTER

"

"One day we'll kick a ball together in the sky above. have lost a dear friend, and the world has lost a legend. One day, I hope, we will play soccer together in the sky."

PELE

"He leaves us but does not leave, because Diego is eternal. I keep all the beautiful moments with him and send my condolences to all his family and friends. RIP."

against Atletico Bilbao in his first season, Maradona, who would face xenophobic and racist insults against Bilbao in the second game, snapped. He initiated a brawl and was sold to Napoli, a club from one of the poorest

thrillers

be overlooked and Maradona would be mobbed by bystanders wherever he went, all vying to 1-0 defeat to West Germany. harboured. The final ended in a 1-0 defeat to West Germany. harboured by bystanders photographers, injuring four in February 1992. The 1994 World Cup would feature a further declare their affection.

play through injury and captain leave Napoli in 1992 after a headlines about the man, myth Argentine to the World Cup final 15-month ban. He then fired and legend would continue.

He would fail a drug test for failed drug test and signalled the In 1990, Maradona would cocaine shortly after and would end of an illustrious career but

holds a unique timelessness. He will never be black or white, there is far too much of a consequence to painting him in either light. But now, finally, he will be at peace. And that is all he truly ever asked for.

LIONEL MESSI

Ctg face Dhaka after opening-day thrillers

Rajshahi to take on Khulna in day's first match

SPORTS REPORTER



Tuesday provided much-needed succour for cricket fans as it marked the proper resumption of competitive cricket in the country since it was rocked by the Covid-19 outbreak in March.

There was drama, agony and, most importantly, some good cricket from all four teams, which days. Gazi Group Chattogram will

be play their first game against Beximco Dhaka in today's second game and will definitely need to hit the ground running and be prepared for some action-packed

cricket. Loaded with some of the country's most highly rated players in the likes of Mustafizur Rahman, Mominul Haque, Soumya Sarkar, Liton Das, Mosaddek Hossain and Taijul Islam, Chattogram looks to be a good unit. Led by Mohammad

raised the bar for the coming a fine blend of youth and experience from the domestic circuit.

But having the best team may not be enough, as was proved when young Najmul Hossain's Minister Rajshahi managed to thump a rather strong Dhaka, led by Mushfiqur Rahim, while defending 169.

Rajshahi's Mahedi Hasan put in a fine all-around performance where, first hitting a fifty and then bowling a magnificent last over, in which he bowled five dot balls to Muktar Ali, who had just scored 21 in the 19th over. It Mithun, Chattogram also has was his intelligent bowling and



(L-R) Soumya Sarkar and Liton Das, two of the most destructive openers in Bangladesh cricket, will pair up for Gazi Group Chattogram in their first match of the Bangabandhu T20 Cup against Beximco Dhaka today. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



Beximco Dhaka captain Mushfigur Rahim will look for a victory after an opening-game defeat against Minister Group Rajshahi.

expert execution that condemned they needed nine to win off the last over.

Young skipper Najmul will be oozing with confidence when they take on another big team on paper in the day's first game, the Mahmudullah-Riyad led Gemcon Khulna, who had narrowly escaped a defeat against Fortune Barishal on the opening day.

On the day that Shakib Al Hasan returned to competitive cricket, it was teammate Ariful Haque who stole the show as Khulna needed 22 off the last over while chasing 153. The hardhitting right-hander smashed four sixes off Mehedi Hasan Miraz to clinch a scintillating victory.

Back to today's second game, Chattogram skipper Mithun said what matters most is the team that plays well on the given day.

"Before the opening day of Dhaka a two-run defeat when the tournament, everyone was trying to figure out which one is the strongest team on paper. But after watching the game on the other day, it was clear that playing well on the given day actually matters. The wicket looks pretty good and if it remains the same there will be good cricket as the tournament Mithun progresses," told reporters yesterday.

From Dhaka's point of view, they will definitely look to come back strongly today and Muktar Ali will be one of the key players for them after picking up three wickets with his medium pace and almost winning the match against Rajshahi with his 16-ball

Dhaka skipper Mushfiqur needs to lead the team from the front as it was his dismissal for 41 runs on the opening day that was probably the turning point.

ICC must deliver world events

Says new chairman Greg Barclay

REUTERS, Wellington



New International Cricket Council (ICC) Chairman Greg Barclay told Reuters on Wednesday his organisation must deliver their pinnacle events over the next three years or there will be serious financial consequences for the sport.

The Covid-19 pandemic forced the ICC to reschedule three of their world tournaments, and Barclay, confirmed as chairman of the global governing body on Tuesday, said they were contracted to deliver them within the

broadcasting current agreement.

"We have got to deliver the world events that are to come and those that are postponed," Barclay told Reuters by telephone on Wednesday of the agreements that expire in mid-2023. "Not just for the cricketing outcomes but there are commercial concerns as well.'

men's 2020 The Twenty20 World Cup in Australia and 2021 women's World Cup in New Zealand have been moved to 2022, while the



NZC

NZC.NZ

men's 2023 World Cup in India has been pushed back to later that year.

"If we fail to deliver all of those events then we will be penalised by the broadcasters and we won't receive the last of the ongoing payments," added Barclay. "That, in turn, is going to affect the ICC's ability to invest in its own programmes and enable it to make distributions to members. Unfortunately a lot of the ICC members are heavily reliant on those disbursements."

Barclay replaces interim chairman Imran Khwaja. Commercial lawyer Barclay has served as New Zealand Cricket's representative on the ICC board for the last six years.

DHAKA THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2020, AGRAHAYAN 11, 1427 BS





Domestic Violence The scourge worsens amid pandemic

ASK data says 205 women killed by their husbands this year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The pandemic and the subsequent lockdown led to more cases of domestic violence, said speakers at a virtual discussion organised by Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) vesterday.

Incidents of domestic violence are rarely reported in the media, with only the most extreme cases finding coverage, but even the scant reporting showed a large spike since the beginning of March.

Statistics presented by ASK show the rise of reported cases from 29 in March to 81 in July.

Dowry-related violence also rose from 167 last year to 184 this year -- this number however goes only up till October.

In addition, according to ASK data, 205 women were murdered by their husbands this year.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, pointed out that the lockdown has provided clear proof that women are not safe in their own homes.

"Through our work we found out that during the lockdown more women reported being victims of domestic violence and many new cases were of those who had not been victims before. Once the lockdown was lifted, the SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, rights activists and general women demonstrated by bringing out a torch procession during an event, under the banner of Feminists Across Generations, also known as FemGen Alliance, with the slogan "Muktir Michhil" or "March for Freedom". The photo was taken yesterday on Satmasjid Road in the capital's Dhanmondi area. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

White House co-op 'sincere'

Says Biden, presents security and foreign policy team

Agencies

President-elect Ioe Biden said Tuesday that communication from the Trump administration to help with his transition has been "sincere" since Services General the Administration ascertained his election win on Monday.

"Immediately, we've gotten outreach from the national security shop to just across the board," Biden told NBC News' Lester Holt in his first interview as President-elect.

"And they're already working out my ability to get presidential daily briefs, we're already working out meeting with the Covid team in the White House and how to not only distribute but get from a vaccine being distributed to a person able to get vaccinated."

"So I think we're gonna not be so far behind the curve as we thought we might be in the past," he added

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Foreign minister, secy test positive

Trip to OIC meet in Niger cancelled DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen have tested positive for coronavirus just before their scheduled visit to Niger to attend the foreign minister-level meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Mega-shark raised its young *in nurseries*



Mob beats 2 'robbers' dead in Narsingdi Our Correspondent, Brahmabaria

An angry mob beat two escaping "robbers" to death in Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila early yesterday.

Among the dead is Sohel Mia, 30, a resident of Kamalpur village in Kishoreganj's Kuliarchar upazila. The identity of the other deceased couldn't be confirmed immediately.

Quoting villagers, nspector (investigation

Abul Kalam of Shibpur

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES Bangabandhu asks Adamjee workers to increase production

November 26, 1972

Shamsuddoza Sajen

EXPEDITE REPATRIATION

The governments of Bangladesh and India regretted Pakistan's failure to comply with the joint Indo-Bangladesh proposal to repatriate all families of Bangladesh nationals in Pakistan purely on humanitarian grounds, according to a foreign ministry announcement in Dhaka today. Earlier, the two governments had announced their decision to repatriate all families (children and women) of Pakistani civilian internees and prisoners of war not



Hindu families living in fear of land grabbers

Local influential tries to drive them away from own land

MD AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Three Hindu families, with members who fought in the Liberation War, are now living in fear of attacks by land grabbers in Biroi village of Gafargaon, Mymensingh.

The families are facing threats of eviction from their ancestral lands.

On September 28, the criminals assaulted the family members and beat them up. Some of the family members then fled the area. They have come back recently

They were tested as required before the overseas travel and found positive Tuesday night. They had no symptoms before the test, according to the foreign ministry.

As per the doctor's recommendations, they are now staying isolated at their residences.

A foreign ministry statement read that the scheduled visit to Niger by AK Abdul Momen and Masud Bin Momen has SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



AFP, Paris

The largest sharks ever to have roamed the oceans parked their young in shallow, warm-water nurseries where food was abundant and predators scarce until they could assume their title as kings and queens of the sea.

But as sea levels declined in a cooling world, the brutal mega-predator, Otodus megalodons, may have found fewer and fewer safe-haven coastal zones where its young could safely reach adulthood, researchers reported in The Royal Society journal Biology Letters yesterday.

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Model Police Station said a group of 10-15 robbers, armed with local weapons, robbed cash and gold jewellery from the house of one Harun in the upazila's Joynagar village around 1:30am.

Alerted by night guards about the fleeing robbers, a group of locals in the neighbouring Murgiber village intercepted them around 3:30am. At one

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detained in India.

In response, the government of Pakistan announced its decision to permit as a first step 10,000 Bangalee women and children to

leave Pakistan for Bangladesh. The two governments have requested Pakistan to inform the Swiss Embassy in Islamabad of the travel arrangements of families of Bangladeshi nationals from Pakistan at the earliest possible time.

BANGABANDHU ASSURES ADAMJEE WORKERS

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today urges workers of Adamjee Jute Mills to increase production and assures them that he would personally look into the problems of the mills. A large crowd of Adamjee Jute Mill workers came to

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with police protection.

Paritosh Chandra Singha, 60, said his family and the families of his two brothers have lived in their ancestral land all their lives. Four of his family members were freedom fighters.

"After the Liberation War, we exchanged 27-decimal of land out of a 51-decimal plot with a neighbour named Rajab Ali," said Paritosh.

Around 15 year ago, Rajab's son Abdul Awal Bacchu sold the land to a local influential person named Mostafa Mia, 40.

Immediately after taking possession of that 27-decimal land, Mostafa started SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

37 killed as bus, truck crash in Brazil

AFP, Sao Paulo

At least 37 people were killed and 15 injured yesterday when a bus and a truck crashed in southeastern Brazil, police said.

The bus, which was carrying workers at a textile factory, collided with the truck early in the morning on a highway outside the town of Taguai, in Sao Paulo state, police said.

The death toll, initially reported as 32, was expected to rise further, state police said in a statement.

"We know there are more victims in the wreckage of the vehicles, SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 26 Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha AZAN 5-05 12-45 3-45 5-21 7-00 JAMAAT 5-40 1-15 4-00 5-24 7-30 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Construction workers working on a high-rise building without any safety gear, ultimately risking their lives, in Mohammadpur's Tikkapara area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO RASHED SHUMON

Virus load soars in US

LA shutters restaurants; Europe eases lockdowns

Agencies

Officials warned Americans to stay home for the Thanksgiving holiday as a restaurant dining ban in Los Angeles was due to come into force yesterday, while parts of Europe eyed looser coronavirus lockdowns over the festive season.

The three-week order in America's second-biggest city will begin as California faces record Covid-19 cases, and its health secretary urged people to avoid large family gatherings.

"It's as important to say 'no' even when it comes to the closest people in our family," doctor Mark Ghaly said, adding he had barred his mother from a planned celebration.

The US government's health protection agency has, for the first time, called on Americans not to travel for an annual holiday which usually sees families get together over turkey, yams and cranberry sauce.

With the US confronted by soaring numbers of deaths and new cases, plans to deliver a vaccine to Americans are accelerating.

More than six million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine will be available in the first week after it is cleared for emergency use -- which is likely next month -- and 40 million by the end of December, according to officials.

There were more than 86,000 coronavirus hospitalisations in the US on Tuesday, a record, as well as 167,000 new cases and more than 2,000 deaths.

As America grappled with its crisis, some European SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

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