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PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES UGC for uniform admission system

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Universities to decide after discussion MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The University Grants Commission now wants a uniform admission system for all private universities as the majority of public universities are set to introduce the new system next year.

Once introduced, the uniform system at private universities will reduce the financial burden and hassles of admission seekers and their guardians, says the regulatory body for both public and private universities.

In its "Annual Report 2019", the UGC has made a set of recommendations, including the introduction of uniform admission system for private universities. It submitted the report to President Abdul Hamid on Sunday.

Top UGC officials said the new system will help address the issues regarding some private universities that enrol students without any admission tests, flouting the UGC rules on student admission.

'We have made the recommendations, keeping in mind many issues," UGC Member Prof Muhammed Alamgir told The Daily Star yesterday.

The majority of public universities have already announced that they would hold a uniform admission test titled "Central Admission Test" to reduce the hassles of admission seekers, he mentioned.

"Now we can tell the private universities to go for uniform admission test. Public medical colleges first introduced the system and then private medical colleges followed suit.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

As the cold wave sweeps over the country, street children find a sweet spot to take a nap at Khilgaon in the capital. They sleep close to an exhaust vent of a restaurant kitchen that is pumping out warm air from the stoves.

Saudi flights suspended for another week

More than 5,000 workers stuck

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Regd. No. DA 781

Saudi Arabia yesterday extended suspension of all international flights to the kingdom for another week, adding to the worries of more than 5,000 migrant workers in Bangladesh about their return to that country.

The Saudi government, however, said foreign citizens would be able to leave the kingdom by air.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Health watchdog remains invisible

Poush 14, 1427 BS

Not a single meeting held in last nine months of pandemic

RASHIDUL HASAN

The parliamentary standing committee on health ministry has shown nothing short of indifference to the health emergency caused by the pandemic.

It had not held a single meeting, let alone make a visible move since March when the first cases of the coronavirus were detected in the country, putting the healthcare services under strain and exposing corruption and mismanagement in the health sector.

Since it was formed in January 2019, the JS body met only six times, officials said. As a result, the committee could not ensure accountability and transparency in the health ministry.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

COVID VACCINE ROLLOUT India starts 2-day dry run in 4 states

NDTV ONLINE

A two-day dry run for coronavirus vaccine program started in Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat and Assam yesterday morning.

Focus on management of possible adverse events after immunisation, and dry runs that include checks on cold storage and transportation arrangements will be part of program that will be carried out in the chosen districts in each state.

All the Indian states will report the observations - recorded during the program - to the Centre. The government plans to cover 30 crore people in the SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

1,776 more Rohingyas sail for Bhashan Char

16 PAGES PLUS LIFESTYLE PRICE : TK12.00

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Some 1,776 more Rohingyas are set to be relocated to Bhashan Char in Hatiya upazila of Noakhali today.

The second batch of Rohingyas from 428 families of refugee camps have already reached Chattogram from Cox's Bazar yesterday, witnesses said.

Witnesses in Ukhia and Teknaf said the Rohingyas, who would like to go to Bhashan Char voluntarily, were taken to Chattogram on buses amid presence of law enforcers.

They said officials briefed the refugees on how they would be taken to the island and gave them breakfast in the transit camp at Ukhia Degree College ground and then they were taken to Chattogram.

The refugees will be taken to Bhashan Char from Chattogram Boat Club on navy ship this morning, officials said.

Rohingya leaders said they became interested in moving to Bhashan Char after knowing the detailed facilities in the island.

They said many are showing interest to PHOTO ON PAGE 12 SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Govt retreated from stance, zealots didn't

Menon tells Star on row over sculpture

GOLAM MORTOZA

Rashed Khan Menon is an important figure in Bangladesh's political history. He was at the frontlines during the mass upsurge in 1969 and the Liberation War in 1971. Currently, he is the president of the Workers Party of Bangladesh. He is also a lawmaker from Dhaka-8 and has previously served as a minister in the Awami League-led government. Menon recently talked with The Daily Star about the current political situation in the country.

The following are excerpts from the interview.

The Daily Star: The AL-led grand alliance government is in its third consecutive term. As a politician and alliance partner, what is your observation on the current political and social situation?

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3







HONOURING OUR ICT LEADERS WITH THE PRESTIGIOUS

5th The Daily Star



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KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Group Co-Chief Executive Officer VEON

Sergi Herrero joined VEON, a multinational telecommunication services company headquartered in Netherlands, as joint Chief Operating Officer in September 2019, following a period as Facebook's Global Director of Payments and Commerce Partnerships, where he oversaw the launch and growth of payment and commerce capabilities for Messenger, WhatsApp and Instagram. He has also led the deployment of Charitable Giving, the scaling and optimisation of the Facebook Ads payments business and drove the expansion of the platform's global marketplace. Before joining Facebook in 2014, he held several senior roles in technology, banking and consulting.

CATEGORIES OF AWARDS





SAFA Award for Best Presented Annual Report 2019

Bank Asia is the 1st Prize Winner among all Private Banks in South Asia

BANGLADESH UPDATE 932 New cases in 24hrs 15,10,080 Total cases **7,479** Deaths

4,53,318 Recoveries



Scattered violence, irregularities mar municipality polls

STAR REPORT

The municipal polls yesterday were marked by scattered incidents, including technical faults in Electronic Voting Machines, irregularities and an alleged assault on a journalist.

Voters expressed mixed reactions over the use of EVMs. Some found it difficult, while others said it was easier than ballot papers.

The Election Commission held votes in 24 municipalities yesterday as the first of four phases to stage elections amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Voting in some polling stations was halted due to technical faults in the machines.

In Dhaka's Dhamrai, voting at Ekush Jyoti Bidya Niketon Centre was halted for around three hours in the morning due to technical faults in the EVM, said

voters. "I have been waiting in the queue since around 8:00am. But I have not been able to cast my vote till now due to a technical fault in the EVM," said Nasrin Sultana, who was talking to our correspondent around 11:00am at the centre.

The polling station's Presiding Officer Shah Alam claimed that voting was halted for only around 20 minutes, but it did not have any impact because voting was continuing through other EVMs.

This correspondent found technical faults in EVMs in at least seven polling centres in Dhamrai municipality.

Meanwhile, a journalist was allegedly assaulted by a presiding officer while covering the municipality elections at Dhamrai Collegiate School centre.

The centre's Presiding Officer Azizul Haque allegedly snatched the mobile phone of Jahir Raihan, a staff reporter of Bangla daily Prothom Alo, and also attacked and verbally abused him, the journalist alleged.

Contacted, Azizul claimed that he snatched the mobile phone as the journalist was secretly taking pictures of secret voting booths, which he said was illegal. Jahir, however, said he was taking pictures of voting out in the open.

Meanwhile, BNP candidate Dewan Nazim Uddin Monju boycotted the elections alleging irregularities in voting, obstructing him from casting a vote, and harassment of his activists.

In Barishal's Bakerganj, young Chaiti Das cast her vote for the first time at Bakerganj Government Primary School.

"I feel that I am very lucky to have a chance to cast my first vote through an EVM. It appears very easy to me, she told The Daily Star after exiting the polling station.

Housewife Mitali Das, who cast her vote at Bakerganj Government College, said, "I was able to learn how to use EVMs in mock voting a few days ago, so I faced no trouble in casting my vote." Meanwhile, BNP mayoral candidate

SM Moniruzzaman alleged that his driven out from

the centre. No agents of other mayoral candidates could be found there. It was also noticed that Awami League candidate agents were entering the secret room with voters. As per law, only a voter is allowed to go there to cast

a vote.

Asked about it, the agents said they were helping voters use EVMs. Contacted, the centre's Presiding Officer Md Hasanuzzaman said he

would look into the matter. Allegations of similar irregularities were found in other polling stations.

Two mayoral candidates out of four boycotted the election within two hours of the start of voting, alleging corruption.

The municipal elections in Panchagarh was held with some stray incidents.

In Panchagarh, several unruly young people vandalised District Election Officer Md Alamgir's vehicle with sticks around 11:00am in front of the Panchagarh Collectorate Adarsha Shikkha Niketan polling centre while he was returning after visiting the polling centre.

During the attack, a police constable, Rabiul Islam, was also injured.

Besides, five motorcycles were vandalised at Nurun Ala Ńur Madrasa Centre and at least 16 people were injured at Notunbosti Government Primary School as supporters of rival groups of councillor candidates clashed during the elections.

Of the injured, three were shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital as their condition deteriorated fast, police and hospital sources said.

In the election, there were three mayoral candidates, 37 general councillor candidates and 16 councillor candidates for the reserved seat for vomen.

Yesterday's elections were the first of four phases which the Election Commission had planned amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Along with candidates of two major political parties -- Awami League and BNP, some other parties, including Jatiya Party and Islami Andolan Bangladesh, contested the elections.

Earlier, the EC urged voters to maintain health safety guidelines to avoid spreading of coronavirus. A few days before election day, the EC had also arranged mock voting and campaigns on EVMs in the electoral areas

There are 6.25 lakh voters in the 24 municipalities. However, the turnout could not be known immediately.

A total of 93 mayoral aspirants contested the 24 posts, while 801 councillor candidates contested 216 posts and 266 candidates for 72 women's reserved seats, as per the EC.

According to the local government division, there are 329 municipalities in the country. The EC will hold elections in 224 municipalities. Tenures of these municipalities will expire by March 2021. A total of 62 municipalities will go to polls in the second phase on January 15 and the third phase will see elections in 64 municipalities on January 30. The fourth phase is likely to be held in mid-



A differently-abled man gives his fingerprints so that he could vote via electronic voting machines at Bakerganj municipality of Barishal yesterday. PHOTO: TITU DAS

Govt retreated from stance, zealots didn't

FROM PAGE 1

Menon: The government has achieved outstanding success in accelerating the country's infrastructural growth and economic development. Bangladesh has graduated to a developing country from being a least developed country. Per capita income has increased. A stable political situation is also

prevailing, although politics has been polarised by two parties. Along with these developments, measures were supposed to be taken to curb corruption and stop criminalisation of politics, which was a commitment of the 14-party alliance. But corruption has increased.

It has spread in every level of society despite the government's zero-tolerance policy that saw some mid-level corrupt persons arrested. Criminalisation of politics is still prevailing. Still, the level of corruption is lower than those of the past autocratic governments and the BNP-Jamaat era.

DS: You said the country's political situation is stable, but there is a question whether political activities exist in the country at all. Opposition parties are barred from holding political programmes and speaking freely. There are also questions over killings and abductions.

Menon: There are allegations of opposition parties being barred from holding political programmes. We had waged movements in much more adverse situations in the past. We fought against Pakistani ruler Ayub Khan, fought for one and a half decade (against autocratic rulers) post 1975.

During the BNP-Jamaat era many people died and many others were injured in Operation Clean Heart. But none could stop us from waging a movement, driven by a democratic spirit. So, saying that democracy is absent and doing nothing don't make sense. Hefajat-e-Islam is active DS: in politics again. It opposed the construction Bangabandhu's of sculpture and even said they would throw the sculpture in the Buriganga river. Awami League leaders and ministers reacted saying sculptures and statues are not the same. What's your take on this situation? Menon: This is not an isolated issue; it is a political issue. It aims to establish Bangladesh as a fundamentalist and communal state. In a recent press conference, Mamunul Haque of Hefajat

said they respect Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, but not his sculpture. He even said, "Once we get the morale and organisational strength, we will dismantle all sculptures and throw them into the river".

While referring to "Shikha Chironton" inside the cantonment, Mamunul's father, late Azizul Haque, in 1997 said, "Military persons guard the cantonment with firearms. If we want to go there, we will have to be prepared for a battle and we are preparing for it."

His interview was published in 1997 in the weekly Bichitra, in which he even admitted that he was against the Liberation War in 1971, saying, "Neutrally, our stance was against the Liberation War in 1971.

So, there is a continuity in the words of the father and son.

Hefajat leader Babunagari said the government will have to entertain their conditions, if it wants to stay in power. They demanded the cancellation of women policy and education policy. They don't want anyone to speak against them, and they will declare anyone an atheist whenever they wish.

They created similar noises against a Lalon sculpture and another sculpture on the Supreme Court premises. Then, the government compromised with them

DS: You were a minister at the time... Menon: I said at the time that it was a moral defeat for us. The prime minister scolded both me and Hasanul Haque Inu for our remarks. She asked how we could say this, being ministers. She also said we could say so only after resigning (as ministers).

Fundamentalists like Azizul, Babunagari and Mamunul never retreated from their stance. It is the government that has retreated time and

religion. But we are compromising every step of the way in the "Mujib Year". Nothing appears coincidental to me. When Bangabandhu's speech was played in parliament, the part where he alked about secularism was dropped.

But none took responsibility for that. In the 14-party meeting, I said a fresh effort was being made for the emergence of a new religion-based politics. DS: Is the 14-party alliance still

active?

Menon: The 14-party alliance was formed amid a movement, but its activities have dwindled after the [2008] election. Recently, the alliance's activities have become limited. It was once said that the government was a 14-party government, but now it is an Awami League government. I raised the issue in a recent meeting.

DS: Considering your ideological position and ethics, did you ever feel that those values were compromised by the way you were elected as a lawmaker in the 2014 and 2018 elections?

Menon: Definitely. I spoke about this issue in parliament... I said people have lost interest in elections. Not only that, I have also said people have expressed their dissatisfaction over their voting right. I even said people did not accept the election. I was criticised for this remark.

But it is a matter of regret that a negative perception has been created in the public minds over the elections. We have gone far from the point for which we fought during the Pakistan era and after independence.

DS: Ensuring the rights to vote and the right to rice was the slogan of your alliance. But people's right to vote have been curbed and allegations of rigging are widespread...

Menon: Such a situation prevails

Thailand records 3,000 foreign tourists in Nov as ban eases **REUTERS**, Bangkok

Thailand recorded 3,065 foreign tourists in November, official data showed yesterday, in its second month of receiving long-stay visitors after a ban was imposed in April to keep coronavirus infections under control.

The 3,065 foreign tourists in November is just a fraction of the 3.39 million arrivals in the same period last year. In October, there were 1,201 foreign visitors.

Though the country is gradually opening up to foreign visitors and offering incentives to boost domestic travel, efforts to revive its tourismdriven economy are being hampered by an outbreak found 10 days ago that has since infected more than 1,600 people in 43 provinces.

not find him in any electoral campaign. Nor did I find him or any of his men in the polling booths. It was clear that the election would not be fair.

DS: Assuming the BNP or the opposition party did not play its role, do you think it is acceptable that votes can be cast the night before the election?

Menon: I don't accept that. I have said in parliament that in such situations, when the state mechanism becomes over-enthusiastic, it drives the whole system towards destruction. Think of the Election Commission. They are sleeping. You might argue that this is how the EC is formed. The EC has been formed in the same way by previous governments. The election is destined to be criticised if the EC does not act.

DS: You have accepted the activities of the EC when you became an MP. There are allegations that you hardly talked about this issue while you were a minister. What is your response?

Menon: I spoke on this issue when was minister. I even spoke about it in the parliament after the 2018 election. I also spoke when I went to the EC. My lone voice will not help. We need all the democratic, social and intellectual forces to unite and overcome this situation.

DS: A health ministry official issued circular asking Muslim women employees to wear hijab and to make sure their clothes cover their ankle joints Do you think the action of that official has anything to do with your attitude of compromise with Hefajat?

Menon: Not us, but the government has compromised with Hifajat.

DS: There were allegations that what ou avoided saying as a minister the things you said when you were not a minister. Some are even saying that if you are offered the post of a minister, ou will stop saying what you are saying now...

ints wer around 10 centres.

In Chatmohar of Pabna, irregularities took place in some polling stations with polling officials playing a questionable role.

The Daily Star's Pabna correspondent visited Afratpara Government Primary School around 11:00am and found only polling agents of the boat symbol at

1,776 more

FROM PAGE 1

go to Bhashan Char and they are including their names in the list to move there.

The first batch -- of 1,642 Rohingyas was relocated to the island on December 4

Office of the Refugee Relief and Commissioner Repatriation coordinating the relocation process amid concerns of the international community about the island being a risky place for the refugees.

Rohingyas of the first batch expressed their satisfaction and said they chose to move to the facilities -- being built under a Tk 3,100-crore housing project by the Bangladesh Navy -- for safety and comfort.

They added that not only were the living conditions poor in their makeshift homes in the Cox's Bazar

February. Our correspondents from Savar, Barishal, Pabna and Panchagarh contributed to this report]

camps, fighting between rival gangs had made their lives even more difficult.

They believe they can live a better life on the char with greater access to healthcare, education and work.

Compared to the cramped conditions in the camps, the housing project is a better option, they said.

In the camps, a family of six-eight members would have to live together within a 400-square-foot space.

The UN and other development partners, however, expressed concerns demanded independent and assessments of the housing project before relocation began. A UN team has still not been allowed to visit the island.

The UN and rights groups have been questioning the relocation plan, saying the island was prone to floods and could be submerged during high tides

India starts 2-day dry run

FROM PAGE 1

first phase when it rolls out a vaccine for coronavirus.

A total of 2,360 training sessions have been held so far, and 7,000 officials have been trained, including medical officers and vaccinators.

In Andhra Pradesh, the dry run that will take place in Krishna district is aimed at testing the planned operations and the laid-out mechanisms in the state, Health Commissioner Katamaneni Bhaskar told reporters on Sunday.

"It will provide insights into any gaps or bottlenecks so that those could be addressed before the commencement of the actual drive," he was quoted as saying by news agency PTI.

Across the four states, five sessions will be held at identified locations with 25 test pre-identified beneficiaries healthcare workers - for each session.

Feasibility Co-WIN, of an electronic application that identifies beneficiaries, and prerequisites for vaccine introduction as per operational guidelines will be assessed.

AEFI (Adverse Event Following Immunisation) panels will be formed and treatment centres will also be

identified if the vaccine triggers an adverse response in any of the beneficiaries.

"After the dry run, we will prepare a report for the State Task Force, which will review the feedback and guide us on further actions," Bhaskar said. The report will also be submitted to the Union Health Ministry, the commissioner said.

In Assam, the health department will roll out the dry run in two districts Sonitpur and Nalbari. The end-to-end testing of the Covid-19 vaccination process includes vaccine and logistics mobilization to the sites in the two districts, as per officials.

Earlier this month, Bharat Biotech, Serum Institute of India (SII) and Pfizer had applied to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), seeking emergency use authorisation for their Covid-19 vaccines.

India has logged over 1.02 crore coronavirus cases so far, the second highest in the world after the United States. Over 1.47 lakh people have died after contracting the virus, one of the most infectious the world has seen in decades.

DS: Some ministers and ruling party politicians are saying that statues and sculptures are not the same. How do you react to it?

Menon: In the last 14-party meeting on November 30, I said when Hefajat took to the field against war crimes trials in 2013, the prime minister adopted a strategy. But when a strategy overshadows core principles, it invites trouble.

When allegations of demeaning against religion were raised Bangabandhu, standing in the parliament he unequivocally said no one will be allowed to do politics using

We have seen Ayub Khan happily complete his first term. It was also the case with Ershad's regime in '86 and '88 elections. But movements were waged against them.

Mere words will not help restore people's right to vote. Struggle and movement are needed.

I believe democracy is endangered without voting right.

DS: Is the Awami League following the election models of Ayub, Ershad and Ziaur Rahman?

Menon: Let me share my experience of the last election in 2018. An influential BNP leader was my opponent. But I did

Menon: Let me tell you again, when was a minister I spoke on issues like oil, gas and ports in the parliament. It disappointed the prime minister. I made amendments to uphold labour rights. I was offered the post of a minister in 2013, but I did not accept it. There was a lot of controversy that put me in an embarrassing situation. At the end of 2013, when arson attacks started, I became a minister. Now our party stance is clear. We have not only decided against taking ministry posts, but also decided to go independently with an election symbol.

UGC for uniform admission system

FROM PAGE 1

"Once it is introduced, we will know which subjects have high demand among the students..." he added.

In its report, the UGC has mentioned that the government may prepare a guideline on uniform admission test for private universities.

ministry said they would consider the matter after the UGC discusses it with private universities.

chairman of the Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB), said they haven't yet discussed the issue of uniform admission test.

"We will hold meetings and give opinion about it.

"I think uniform admission system will be good for private universities. Students will benefit from it," he said. North South University Vice Chancellor Prof Atiqul Islam said they haven't yet thought about uniform admission test.

He said they will think about it since the UGC has made recommendations in this regard.

UGC recommendations The come about a month after 19 public universities announced that they would hold uniform admission test.

At a meeting on December 19, the VCs of the universities decided that under the new system, there will be three exams -- one each for science, humanities and business studies students -- based on Higher Secondary Certificate exams syllabus.

Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, Jahangirnagar University and Chattogram University decided not to follow the new system.

The new method of admission has been in discussion since 2010. It is aimed at relieving admission seekers of the hassles of travelling to different universities in various parts of the country just to be able to sit for the tests every admission season.

On January 23 this year, the UGC announced that universities would hold a uniform admission test in the 2020-2021 academic year.

UGC Member Alamgir said seven agricultural universities and three of the four engineering universities in the country will form two more separate clusters of universities.

The three engineering universities Chattogram University of are Engineering and Technology, Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology and Khulna University of Engineering and Technology.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) is now showing interest in joining this cluster, the official mentioned. **PVT UNIVERSITIES**

The government has so far approved 105 private universities across the country. Of those, 97 are carrying out academic activities. Now, they enrol students through separate admission tests

"Private universities enrol more than one lakh students a year, and the total number of students is around four lakh," said APUB Chairman Kabir Hossain.

They enrol students in three semesters -- spring (January to April), summer (May to August) and fall (September to December). And almost

half of the students get enrolled in the spring semester which starts after the publication of HSC results.

About 25 percent of the students get enrolled in the summer semester and the rest in the fall semester, according to insiders at private universities.

The minimum requirement set by the UGC for admission to a private university is GPA 2.5, in both the SSC or HSC, or a total of 6 grade points.

"But many private universities do not take any admission test. They sometimes enrol students flouting the minimum requirement set by the UGC," said a top UGC official on condition of anonymity.

Asked, Alamgir said these issues will be resolved once the uniform admission system is introduced. The modalities and other aspects of the new system will be sorted out through discussions with the private universities.

OTHER UGC RECOMMENDATIONS The UGC recommended that the universities increase their research budgets.

It suggested establishing Central Research Laboratory and National Research Council with government funds. It also recommended setting up University Teachers Training Academy for creating qualified teachers.

The regulatory body also called for revising the Private University Act, 2010, under which the private universities run, to make it up-to-date.

It also proposed scrapping the evening, weekend and other executive courses at public and private universities, terming them certificateoriented

Saudi flights

FROM PAGE 1

The General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) of that country made the fresh announcement amid reports of detection of a new mutated strain of the novel coronavirus in the **UK**

In an urgent circular, GACA said foreign airlines are permitted to carry non-Saudi passengers out of the kingdom, taking precautionary measures to prevent the spread of Covid. But they must not allow their crew to leave aircraft.

Earlier on December 21, Saudia, the national flag carrier of the kingdom, suspended all international flights including the ones to and from Dhaka, creating fresh uncertainty over the return of Bangladeshi workers to their workplaces there.

Following the Saudi authorities' decision, Biman Bangladesh Airlines also suspended its flights to and from Jeddah, Riyadh and Dammam that dav.

Prior to the suspension, Biman operated seven flights and Saudia 10 flights a week from Dhaka to the kingdom.

Around 55,000 Saudi-bound Bangladeshi workers remained stranded for over six months since March when air travel between the two countries was suspended due to the pandemic.

Almost all of them managed to fly back to the kingdom after resumption of air travel in August, a Saudia official told this newspaper, seeking anonymity.

The fresh suspension of flights night again create uncertainty over the return of over 5,000 Bangladeshi workers to Saudi Arabia, added the official.

Asked, a top official of the education

Contacted, Sheikh Kabir Hossain,



ROHINGYA REPATRIATION Quader for more int'l pressure on Myanmar Bss, Dhaka

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday called upon the international community to take more effective strategies for mounting pressure on Myanmar to take back its Rohingya nationals from Bangladesh.

Quader, also general secretary of Awami League, said this at a regular press conference at his official residence on

parliament premises in the capital. He said since the outset of Rohingya crisis, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

has been continuing diplomatic efforts seeking cooperation from the international community for a peaceful solution to the problem.

The economy and environment of Bangladesh have been affected badly for hosting around 12 lakh Rohingyas who took shelter at Ukhia and Teknaf, he added. The minister said social environment

and ecological balance of the areas are now at stake due to excessive number of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Ensure transparency in procurement, distribution of Covid-19 vaccine

Demands rights body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency and accountability in the procurement and distribution of Covid-19 vaccines must be ensured, demanded Committee for the Protection of Fundamental Rights yesterday.

In a statement, on behalf of the committee, eminent jurist Shahdeen Malik said the health minister has recently informed people about the government's process to procure Covid-19 vaccine from various sources.

As per its latest announcement, people have been informed that about 10 crore vaccines will be collected by the government.

"First of all, we welcome this initiative and we are sure that vaccination will start in the country very soon. But we urge the government to provide adequate information to people about the news of the import of vaccines through the mediation of non-government organisations," reads the statement.

"In particular, we urge the government to provide the citizens with detailed information on whether the legal requirements were met and competitive bids were invited for the selection and identification of the said public limited company," the statement also added.

"We are concerned that since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, widespread corruption in various sectors of the state, especially in the health sector, has been exposed or reported in the news. We fear that if transparency and accountability in the procurement and distribution of these vaccines are not ensured, hundreds of crores of taka of the government may be misappropriated and particular quarter may benefit from it through illegal means."

The committee also demanded that a policy is formulated on vaccination on a priority basis.

It also urged the government to hold a press conference at least once a week to ensure transparency and accountability, inform people about the details of each process and its associated costs and who will get priority in getting the vaccines.

Roghingya Influx

Host community faced challenges for lowered labour costs: RIB study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Working-class people in host communities near Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar faced occupational challenges as Rohingyas could be hired as labourer at lower cost.

Besides, some Rohingyas were involved in selling relief materials, especially gas cylinders, which caused shrinkage of occupation for local firewood sellers.

These were revealed in a research conducted by Research Initiative, Bangladesh (RIB) on six groups of people in the host community and six groups in Rohingya community at four camps in Teknaf and Ukhiya.

Findings of the research were shared yesterday during a webinar on Building Capacities of Local Communities to Mitigate Problems Created by the Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar".

Field work and a dialogue with NGOs, humanitarian actors, academics for the research were conducted in two phases -- from May 2019 to March 2020

Sharing the findings, RIB Executive Director Meghna Guhathakurta said all respondents in Rohingya community wished to return to their homeland in Myanmar, but not unless they feel safe and secured there.

Also, some Rohingyas in Teknaf camps said they do not want to be relocated to Bhasan Char, Meghna said.

As reason, they mentioned they were inhabitants of hilly areas in people living there. It is also putting adverse Myanmar, and were in fear of living in a coastal area.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

CENTURY-OLD MONGOLABASH AT SUTRAPUR Renovation at the cost of historical aesthetic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The century-old Mongolabash at Dhaka's Sutrapur is being renovated to improve the living space of Kabi Nazrul Government College students, but this improvement is happening at the cost of the building's historical value and aesthetic style.

Mongolabash is well-known in the area as a place for Mukti Khelaghor. It was built near the end of the 19th century or the beginning of the 20th century by Zamindar Jatindra Kumar Saha. The esteemed Zamindar left the country after the partition in 1947.

The building has been used as a dormitory for students of the college since 1997 and as a hub for cultural organisation Mukti Khelaghor since 1973. The building was in need of renovation to better accommodate the students, but the work is being done using cement plaster instead of the lime shurki (brick dust) used for the original structure.

Taimur Islam, chief executive of Urban Study Group (USG) yesterday led a human chain in front of Mongolabash. Representatives of USG met with the college's principal

last week and were assured that steps good in renovating the structure. will be taken within a week. However, the work remained halted for just one day after the meeting, and the use of cement plaster was resumed soon afterwards.

Activists of Urban Study Group gathered in front of Mongolabash in Old Dhaka's Sutrapur yesterday, demanding a

stop to the renovation work that puts the structure's heritage at risk.

Taimur explained that renovation of historical buildings should be done in a way that preserves the structure's original aesthetics instead of modifying it. "Using cement plaster for renovation will weaken the structure as it was built using separate materials, and it will ruin the building's historical aesthetic," he said.

"We were supposed to prepare a design for primary renovation work for them and we would also identify the places where renovation is necessary," he said.

There was a time in Dhaka's history when this building was considered one of the most beautiful structures in the city besides Rup Lal House and Ahsan Manjil, explained Taimur, adding that it was also used to shoot films and drama.

"We have studied buildings such as these and we know using cement plaster will cause more harm than

Removing the shurki will not help preserve the building," said Taimur. Principal of Kabi Nazru

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Rofs an (23,07)

Nazrul Government College, Prof IK Selim Ullah said the work is continuing as "no one has given any written proposal in this regard."

"The compound is far from the college and worth crores of money. It is often occupied by others besides the students. We couldn't even clean the building and put up a signboard of the college due to interference from others," he said. However, he did not specify which parties are interfering with these activities.

"This organisation [USG] that's now creating obstacles [to the renovation] did not come to us earlier," said the principal, "If they submit a formal proposal then we can carry it forward to the authorities to take necessary steps."

"The students feel insecure in the building. It needs better facilities and renovation," explained Prof Selim Ullah.

About the meeting with USG, he said only one student came to them SEE PAGE 4 COL 2 bail from HC STAFF CORRESPONDENT JKG Healthcare's Chairman Dr Sabrina Arif Chowdhury has filed a bail petition with the High Court in a case filed for issuing

FAKE COVID CERTIFICATES

Sabrina seeks

fake Covid-19 certificates. Sabrina's principal lawyer Syed Mamun Mahbub told The Daily Star yesterday that the HC may hold hearing on the petition today.

He, however, refused to say the grounds mentioned in the bail petition on which the HC may grant her bail.

Deputy Attorney General Monirul Islam told this correspondent that Sabrina Arif Chowdhury sought bail citing ground that she has been in jail for a long period of time and there is no specific allegation against her.

Earlier on July 20, a Dhaka court denied bail to Sabrina in connection with the same case.

On July 12 this year, police arrested Dr Sabrina, wife of JKG Healthcare Chief Executive Officer Ariful Chowdhury who was arrested earlier in the same case.

Md Kamal Hossain, a resident of Mirpur n Dhaka, filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station on June 23 on charge of issuing fake Covid-19 certificates under the JKG Healthcare.

Dr Sabrina was working as a registrar doctor at National Heart Institute and Hospital.

Govt official | Embezzling Zakat Fund found dead in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered body of a government official from the capital's Moghbazar area yesterday morning.

The deceased, Mir Aftabul Islam Sumon (46), was a deputy assistant engineer of BTCL, said Subinspector Shariful Islam of Hatirjheel Police Station.

On information, police rushed to T&T colony area around 8:30am and recovered the body between two buildings, he said.

A rope was around his neck and part of it was found tied to a water tank of a building, the SI said.

The man used to live in the colony with his wife and three children. He went out of home for morning prayers but did not return. The family and neighbours then found his body there, the SI said.

Hearing on charge framing against Sayedee on Jan 11

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed January 11 for hearing on charge framing in a case filed against Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee and five others for embezzling Tk 1.27 crore from Islamic Foundation's Zakat Fund.

Judge Sayeda Hosneara of the Special Judge's Court-1 of Dhaka passed the order after a time petition was filed with the court by them, Muzahedul Islam Shahin, a defence lawyer, confirmed to The Daily Star.

In the petition, the defence mentioned that they were yet to get some papers which were necessary for the hearing on charge framing.

ACC Public Prosecutor Mosharraf Hossain Kajol told the court that the case was filed against the accused 10 years ago. The petition was filed to delay the trial proceedings, he said.

During yesterday's hearing, Sayedee, who was earlier convicted for life until death for crimes against humanity during 2012.

the Liberation War in 1971, was produced before the makeshift court at Alia Madrasa in Bakshibazar of Old Dhaka.

The other five accused are: Mohammad Lutful Haque, former director of Islamic Foundation; Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, former chairman of Mosque Council Community Advancement; Mia for Mohammad Yunus, chief secretary of Bandhujan Parishad; Tofazzal Hossain, former president of Islamic Social Welfare Center; and Md Abdul Haq, assistant director of Islamic Foundation's Mosque Council.

Among the five, four are now on bail, while Abul Kalam Azad is on the run, according to sources.

Islamic Foundation's finance and accounting director Aiyub Ali Chowdhury filed the case with the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station on May 24, 2010

Wajed Ali Gazi, an assistant director of the Anti-Corruption Commission, filed the charge sheet in the case on April 30,



The Rayer Bazar Graveyard, located right behind the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial, is not just any graveyard. During the coronavirus pandemic, its eighth sector was dedicated for burying coronavirus patients. But these days, it has become a hub for hanging out, recording social media content and the occasional drug dealing, according to locals. This not only compromises the graveyard's environment, but is also a public health risk. This photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Ensure legal aid for rape survivors: BNWLA to govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To stop the frequent rape incident and other forms of violence against women, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers (BNWLA) recommended Association ensuring survivor-centric comprehensive legal assistance to women and children rape survivors -- including psycho-social services, women and child-friendly legal aid services, and if applicable, safe shelters having women and child-friendly environment.

It also suggested establishing a separate court at the High Court for the speedy trial of the cases related to violence against women.

Apart from the speedy trial and witness protection, BNWLA also urged the government to use modern forensic technology to ensure proper investigation of such cases.

The recommendations were made at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday, organised by BNWLA.

BNWLA President Advocate Salma Ali also recommended a fair probe, free from political influence and demanded trained personnel at all levels of the judiciary.

She suggested redefining penetration in rape definition so that penetration using objects is also criminalised as rape. At the same time, section 155 (4) of the Evidence Act must be amended so that the defence lawyers cannot assassinate the characters of the survivors in court by asking irrelevant questions.

Apart from that, she urged the government to formulate effective sexual harassment complaint committees at educational institutions and workplaces, as per the 2009 High Court guidelines.

Zakia Anarkali, executive member of BNWLA, among others, spoke at the conference, moderated by Advocate Jobaida Parveen, general secretary of the organisation.

French envoy at Saidabad Water **Treatment Plant** CITY DESK

The Ambassador of France

to Bangladesh, Jean-Marin

Schuh along with Fanny

Nesen, project officer

in charge of the water

and sanitation sector of

the Agence Française de

Développement (AFD)

in Dhaka recently visited

the Dhaka Water Supply

and Sewerage Authority

of the Saidabad 1 and 2

a press release.

water treatment plants, said

The visit served as an

the French Government's

opportunity to renew

The visit included a tour

(Dwasa) headquarters.

Fourth bomb found on site of Dhaka airport's 3rd terminal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another 250kg bomb buried at the construction site of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport's (HSIA) 3rd terminal was found yesterday.

Group Captain AHM Touhid-ul Ahsan, director of HSIA, confirmed this in a WhatsApp message. The message said a Bangladesh Air Force team recovered the General Purpose (GP) bomb from the third terminal construction site.

The bomb disposal unit of Air Force's Bangabandhu Base soon rushed to the spot and defused the bomb, the message added.

Later, the bomb was taken to a safe place for dismantling, with necessary precautions.

Bomb experts believe it was dropped sometime during the Liberation War in 1971, the message said.

Earlier on December 9, 14 and 19, workers found three more 250kg GP bombs buried arout three metres deep into the ground when they were excavating for construction work of the third terminal.





ইস্টার্ন ইউনিভার্সিটি পরিচালনা পর্যদের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা সদস্য বিশিষ্ট শিল্পপতি ও সমাজসেবক প্রকৌশলী মো, রিয়াজত আলী বাচ্চু (৭৪) ইস্তেকাল করেছেন (ইরা লিল্লাহি ওয়া ইন্না ইলাইহি রাজিউন)। ভারতের চেন্নাইয়ের অ্যাপোলো হাসপাতালে চিকিৎসাধীন অবস্থায় গত ২৫ ডিসেম্বর তিনি মারা যান। তিনি স্ত্রী. দুই ছেলে, এক

মেয়েসহ অনেক আত্মীয়-স্বজন ও গুণহাহী রেখে গেছেন। মো. রিয়াজত আলী বাচ্চু আউটরাইট গ্রুপ, আউটস্পেস স্পিনিং মিলস্ লিমিটেড ও আর. এ. স্পিনিং মিলস লিমিটেডের চেয়ারম্যান ছিলেন। এ ছাড়া, তিনি মোহামেডান ক্লাবের একনিষ্ঠ সংগঠক এবং অস্ট্রেলিয়ান ইন্টারন্যাশনাল স্কুলের পরিচালনা পরিষদের পরিচালক ছিলেন। আমরা শ্রদ্ধেয় মো রিয়াজত আলী বাচ্চুর মৃত্যুতে গভীরভাবে শোকাহত। তাঁর বিদেহী আত্মার মাগফিরাত কামনা করছি।

শেখ সাইদুর রহমান চেয়ারম্যান, বোর্ড অব ট্রাস্টিজ, ইস্টার্ন ইউনিভার্সিটি



commitments toward the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

CITY

AKM Mohiuddin

Dewanbagi pir no more STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Syed Mahbub-e-Khuda Dewanbagi, known as Dewanbagi Pir, died at a hospital in Dhaka yesterday morning. He was 70.

"He fell sick in the morning and was rushed to a private hospital where he breathed his last around 7am," Shah Alam Sohag, a follower of the deceased, told The Daily Star.

He will be buried after a namaz-e-janaza after Zohr prayers today, he said. Dewanbagi founded

Dewanbag Darbar Sharif at Motijheel's Arambagh.

He was born to Syed Abdur Rashid Sarker and Syeda Zobeda Khatun on December 14, 1949 at Ashuganj, Brahmanbaria. He was sixth among six brothers and two sisters. After Dewanbagi's

demise, his followers started gathering at the Arambagh Darbar Sharif to mourn his death.

IUB holds employee recognition ceremony

CITY DESK

The Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony of Independent University Bangladesh took place on Thursday at the university premises, said a press release.

At the programme, the university recognised and awarded its faculty and staff members for their outstanding contributions towards the achievements of the university over the last three decades

A total of 138 employees were awarded while 23 units received the awards under various categories for outstanding performances. The criteria included length of service, teaching excellence, outstanding staff performancs, exceptional services during the Covid-19 pandemic and more.

A Matin Chowdhury, chairman, board of trustees of the university and Prof Milan Pagon, vice-chancellor (acting) distributed the awards among the awardees.

Khandker Md Iftekhar Haider, treasurer of IUB delivered a vote of thanks, while the event was moderated by Romita Zaman, assistant director, office of the VC at IUB, the press release said.

All members from the faculty and administration were present during the event, along with some invited guests.



Fatema

(Hena)

Hve

French envoy FROM PAGE 3

Government of Bangladesh. Through AFD, the French Government is financing 167 million euros of water projects in Bangladesh, which will supply an additional 950,000 cubic metres of drinking water to Dhaka.

Ambassador Jean-Marin Shuh visited the Saidabad 1 and 2 water treatment plants, constructed by the French company Degremont (Suez). The envoy also visited the site of the Saidabad 3 water treatment plant being financed by AFD, along with KfW, Danida and the European Investment Bank. This project will double the current site's production capacity and once complete, Saidabad will be the largest water treatment plant in Asia.

Jean-Marin Schuh said, "These projects are the results of the continuous presence of France in the water sector in Bangladesh completing an ambitious process started with the visit of President Mitterrand in 1991 and his commitment to contribute to the major works aimed at domesticating the floods which ravaged the country"." The project is in line with the

Government of Bangladesh's decision to replace the extraction of groundwater with the treatment of surface water, in order to meet the city's growing demand. For this reason, the Saidabad treatment plant, like the Gandharbpur treatment plant also financed by AFD, will use water from the the Meghna River.

DCAB elects new leadership at AGM UNB, Dhaka

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Diplomatic Correspondents Association Bangladesh (DCAB) was held yesterday at the Jatiya Press Pantho Rahman Club.

Pantho

Rahman of Channel I and AKM Mohiuddin of UNB were elected president and general secretary, respectively, for the year 2021.

Pantho was elected unopposed while Mohiuddin won against Mizanur Rahman of Daily Manab Zamin. Meanwhile, Mahfuzur Rahman Mishu of Jamuna TV was

elected vice president contesting against Robiul Haque. Other office bearers are joint secretary Abu Hena Emrul

Kayes of Bangla Vision and Atiqur Rahman of asianmail24. In addition, Raheed Ejaz (Prothom Alo), Angur Nahar Monty (Channel News24), Rased Mehedi (Daily Samakal), Nurul Islam Hasib (Bangladesh Post), Ahasan Jewel (Somoy TV) were elected committee members.

Chief Election Commissioner M Shafiqul Karim announced the results following the AGM and vote casting. Outgoing president Angur Nahar Monty presided over the AGĂ.

Rawshan Rahman Eva passes away Bss, Dhaka

Rawshan Rahman Eva, wife of Economic Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr Mashiur Rahman, passed away at a hospital in Dhaka yesterday morning.

She was 74, said a press release. She left behind her

husband, a son, a daughter, and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn her death.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of Rawshan Rahman Eva.

In separate messages of condolence, they prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul, and conveyed their deep sympathy to the bereaved family.

Quader for

FROM PAGE 3

impacts on the tourism industry centring the world's longest natural sea beach in Cox's Bazar, he said.

Quader said the government took the initiative to shift Rohingyas to Bhasan Char with additional facilities as their repatriation to Myanmar has been delayed.

Under the circumstances, those who have shifted to Bhashan Char expressed their satisfaction, he went on saying. But some international organisations and media are spreading that the Rohingyas were shifted forcibly, which is not true, he added.

The minister said only those who voluntarily wanted to shift were taken there and no pressure was put on them.

Turning to the coronavirus situation, Quader said the government has already taken initiatives to procure vaccines which will reach the country in the last week of January or in February.

He said preparations have been taken for properly handling vaccine procurement and management and the health ministry is working on it.

Though the vaccine is yet to reach the country, a vested quarter started spreading misleading information over it, he continued. The AL general secretary urged people not to be confused by such purpose-oriented propaganda.

About BNP leaders' allegation that the government is sacrificing national interests to foreign forces to remain in power, Quader said people actually know who wait at the doors of foreign embassies with flowers and sweets and who seek cooperation from foreign agencies to go to state power.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার সিনিয়র জেল সুপারের কার্যালয় সিলেট কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১ www.prison.sylhet.gov.bd

শ্মারক নং-৫৮.০৪.৯১০০.১৫৬.০৪.০১৭.২০২০- তারিখঃ ২৪/১২/২০২০খ্রিঃ

পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

The Public Procurement Act-2006 & The Public Procurement Regulations-2008 এবং এর তদীয় সংশোধিত বিধি মোতাবেক সিলেট কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১ এর খাদ্যদ্রব্য সরবরাহের নিমিত্তে



wife of late ATM Abdul Hye from Dhaka's

Fatema Hye

Shantinagar and known as Uttarda of the Weekly Chitrali, died at a Dhaka hospital on December 17, aged 82, according to a press release.

She left behind her two sons, two daughters, grandchildren and a host of relatives and admirers to

mourn her death. Her elder son Tasnim Hasan Hye (Tuhin) is executive director of

voluntary organisation 'Human Development Foundation". Fatema Hye is daughter of late Gazi Shamsuddin Ahmad and sister of late Gazi Shahabuddin

Ahmad, editor of the Weekly Sachitra Sandhani. She wrote in various newspapers in 1960s and 70s.

She founded "Karupith Hasthashilpo Shikkha Protishthan" for women after the 1971 Liberation

mean to Bangladeshis?

essay competition

Opportunities and the High Commission of India recently launched a writing competition titled "What Liberation means to me?"

The competition was launched by Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Vikram K Doraiswami on December 15, 2020, during an intergenerational dialogue arranged by the High Commission of India and Youth Opportunities, said a press release.

Osama Bin Noor, co-founder of Youth Opportunities said, "We want to ask the youth the following question: What does the word Liberation mean to you?

During his speech, Doraiswami credited the initiative for being an excellent opportunity for the youth of Bangladesh to express their views. "Given the history of 1971, the word Liberation has a deep rooted meaning for Bangladesh."

Osama Bin Noor, co-founder of Youth Opportunities said, "We want to ask the youth the following question: What does the word Liberation mean to you?

Makshud AM Manik, another co-founder of Youth Opportunities, said, "Through this competition we want to bring out the creativity of Bangladeshi youth," the press release added.

The competition is open to all Bangladeshi youth aged between 18-35 years living in Bangladesh or abroad. They can choose to write the essay either in Bangla or in English.

Winners will be awarded with prizes ranging from crests to laptop. In addition, the winning essay will be published in the "Bharat Bichitra" magazine, the press release said.

Submission deadline for the competition is January

Host community FROM PAGE 3 The respondents in the host community

included vendors, drivers, firewood sellers, butchers, and housewives.

Respondents in host community expressed grievances that they were not recognised accordingly for assistance provided during the initial stage of the influx in August 2017.

On the other hand, Rohingyas expressed concerns about living conditions, health, education, sanitation, and birth registration of their children.

They also shared incidents of domestic violence and child marriage, and said their mobility was restricted. They also shared about lack of justice within their "internal justice system".

ID-529460

e-GP/64/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21

ID-529466

e-GP/68/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21

জিডি-২০৯১

RIB found that people in the host community filed about 70 applications under the Right to Information Act 2009 between November 2019 and February 2020, mainly seeking information regarding social safety net programmes and agricultural services.

Although information was provided against a few applications, they were benefited from such steps since some of them started to get senior citizen allowance, said Meghna Guhathakurta.

While there was lack in effort to promote the RTI law and its benefit among mass people, such use of the law in limited scope was encouraging, said Shamsul Bari, chairman of RIB.



E-mail: eechi@rhd.gov.bo e-GP দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, অত্র সড়ক বিভাগাধীন দরপত্র নং-৪-GP/58/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21 (ID-528514), e-GP/59/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21 (ID-528519), e-GP/64/EE/ CRD/RHD/2020-21 (ID-529460), e-GP/68/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21 (ID-529466) @ e-GP/69/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21 (ID-529467) গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের e-GP Portal এর মাধ্যমে আহবান করা হয়েছে; যা নিম্নেল্লিখিত পোর্টালে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে। e-GP Portal এ নিবন্ধিত যে কোন আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠান বিস্তারিত জানার জন্য উক্ত ওয়েবসাইট www

<u>w.eprocure.gov.bd</u> ভাজট করতে পা	রবেন।
Tender/Proposal ID	Name of work
ID-528514	Supplying of Asphalt Materials for Routine Maintenance works at
e-GP/58/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21	different road of 1) Barayerhat-Heanko-Naryanhat-Fatikchari Road (R-
	151) 2) Feni (Mohammad Ali Bazar)-Chagolniya-Korerhat Road (Z-
	1031) under Chattogram Road Division during the year 2020-2021.
ID-528519	Supplying of Asphalt Materials for Routine Maintenance Works at
e-GP/59/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21	different road of (1) Barayerhat-Jorargonj Old Section Road (N-123);
	(2) Bartakia Old Station Road (N-125), (3) Mithachara Old Section
	Road (N-124), (4) Kumira Old Station Road (N-127) under Chattogram

Road Division during the year 2020-2021.

Chattogram Road Division during the year 2020-2021.

Construction of 1 (one) No. Foot Over Bridge (Teriail) at 196th(P) Km

(Ch: 195+200m) on Dhaka (Jatrabari)-Comilla (Moyanamati)-Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Teknaf National Highways (N-1) under

Supplying Un-skilled Labour for Cutting Jungles and Shrub including

removing & cleaning at 2nd Km (P) to 14th Km (P) of Heanko-Ramgar-

What does 'Liberation'

Youth Opportunities launches

To mark the 50th Victory day of Bangladesh, Youth

	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	8	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়, সুরক্ষা সেবা বিভাগ।	
০১ ০২	এজেন্সি	8	বন্ধান্ত্র শত্রণালয়, পুরস্কা দেখা। বিভাগ। কারা অধিদপ্তর, বাংলাদেশ, ঢাকা।	
<u>02</u> 09	এজোপ সংগ্রহকারী সন্তার নাম	8	কারা আবদন্ডর, বাংলাদেশ, ঢাকা। সিনিয়র জেল সুপার, সিলেট কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১।	C_1
			াসানয়র জেল সুপার, াসলেড কেন্দ্রায় কারাগার-১। সিলেট।	Sa
08	জেলার নাম	8		FROM PA
00	দরপত্রের বিবরণ	8	১। সিলেট কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১ এর ০১/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ	
			হতে ৩১/১২/২০২১খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত সময়ের খাদ্য	Althou
			সরবরাহের পুনঃ দরপত্র (২য় বার)।	organis
			২। সিলেট কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১ এর	to the
			০১/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ হতে ৩১/১২/২০২০খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত	Health
			সময়ের খাদ্য সরবরাহের পুনঃ দরপত্র (৪র্থ বার)।	
			৩। সিলেট কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১ এর	She,
			০১/০১/২০২০খ্রিঃ হতে ৩০/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত	chairm
			সময়ের খাদ্য সরবরাহের পুনঃ দরপত্র (৬ষ্ঠ বার)।	police s
03	দরপত্রের প্রকৃতি	8	দরপত্রের বিবরণ উন্মুক্ত/সীমিত দরপত্র (OTM/LTM)	
٥٩	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি আহবানের	8	১। কারা অধিদগুরের স্মারক নং-৫৮.০৪.০০০০.	
	সূত্র		০৩০.০০৬.২১-১৩৮৩(২) তাং-২৩/১২/২০২০খ্রিঃ।	D
			২। কারা অধিদণ্ডরের স্মারক নং-৫৮.০৪.০০০০.	Re
			০৩০.০০৬.২০-৯২০ তাং- ২০/০৮/২০২০খ্রিঃ।	
			৩। কারা অধিদগুরের স্মারক নং- ৫৮.০৪.০০০০.	FROM PA
			০৩০.০০৬.২০-৯২১ তাং-২০/০৮/২০২০খ্রিঃ।	but th
оъ	মালামালের বিবরণ	8	খাদ্যদ্রব্য সরবরাহ।	writing
03	দরপত্র জামানত (Tender	8	প্রস্তাবিত দরের মোট মৃল্যের উপর ৩% হারে ক্রমিক	Dhi
	Security)		১। ক গ্রুপ- ১,৫০,০০০/- টাকা, খ গ্রুপ-	
			১,৫০,০০০/- টাকা, গ গ্রুপ- ৫০,০০০/- টাকা, ঘ	of the
			গ্রন্থ,৫০,০০০/- টাকা, ৬ গ্রন্থ- ৮০,০০০/- টাকা,	princip
			ক্রমিক ২। ১.০০.০০০/- টাকা, ক্রমিক নং ৩।	would
			জনমন্দ হ। ১,০০,০০০/- তালা, জানন্দ নহ ও। ১০,০০০/- টাকা মাত্র সিনিয়র জেল সুপার, সিলেট	then re
			১০,০০০/- তাব্দা মাত্রা দানদায় ভেল পুশায়, ।গলেচ কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১ এর অনুকূলে যে কোন	Mď
			কেন্দ্রার কারাগার-১ এর জনুক্রুপে বে কোন সিডিউলন্ডক্ত ব্যাংকে জমাকরতঃ ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-	
			াসাভঙলভুক্ত ব্যাংকে জমাকরতঃ ব্যাংক জ্রাফচ/পে- অর্ডার/ব্যাংক গ্যারান্টি এর মূলকপি দরপত্রের সহিত	and for
			অভার/ব্যাংক গ্যার্যান্ড অর মূলকাপ দরপত্রের সাহত দাখিল করতে হবে (ফেরতযোগ্য)।	
10	দরপত্র দলিল প্রান্তির স্থান		দার্থিণ করতে হবে (ফেরতবোগ্য)। কারা উপমহাপরিদর্শক, ঢাকা/সিলেট বিভাগের	
20	শরপত্র শালল প্রান্তির স্থান	8		
			কার্যালয় ও সিনিয়র জেল সুপারের কার্যালয়, সিলেট কেন্ট্রীস কার্যাধার ১ জিলেট	
			কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১, সিলেট।	
22	দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য	8	দরপত্রের বিবরণে বর্ণিত ক্রমিক নং-১ প্রতিটি	6330
			সিডিউলের মৃল্য ১০০০/- টাকা এবং ক্রমিক নং-২ ও	
			৩ এ বর্ণিত প্রতিটি সিডিউলের মূল্য ৫০০/- টাকা।	
১২	সরবরাহকারীর যোগ্যতা	8	(ক) হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্সের (সরবরাহকারী	No. CO
	(যা দরপত্রের সহিত		উল্লেখসহ) এর সত্যায়িত কপি।	NO. CC
	দাখিল করতে হবে)		(খ) হালনাগাদ আয়কর সনদের সত্যায়িত কপি।	
			(গ) হালনাগাদ বিন (ভ্যাট) সনদের সত্যায়িত কপি।	
			(ঘ) ব্যাংক স্বচ্ছলতার হালনাগাদ সনদের কপি।	
			(ঙ) কারা সরবরাহকারী লাইসেন্সের সত্যায়িত কপি	অত্র দণ্ড
			(প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে)।	অন্তৰ্ভূক্ত
			(চ) সরকার অনুমোদিত সংস্থায় সর্বশেষ ০৩ (তিন)	ক্রমিক ৫
			বছরে বিভিন্ন প্রকার খাদ্যদ্রব্য/পণ্য সামগ্রী সরবরাহের	
			অভিজ্ঞতা অথবা কারা বিভাগে কমপক্ষে সর্বশেষ ০৩	
			(তিন) বছরের সরবরাহ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতার	C. Qua
			প্রমাণপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপি।	
			(ছ) দরপত্র জামানতের (Tender Security) ব্যাংক	
			ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ভারের মূলকপি।	
			(জ) দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয়ের মূল রশিদ।	
১৩	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	0	 ক) বিভাগীয় কমিশনারের কার্যালয়, সিলেট। খ) 	
			জালালাবাদ থানা, সিলেট।	
			 প্রধান ফটক, সিলেট কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-১, সিলেট। 	
28	দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়ের	8	১০/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।	
	সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়			
26	দরপত্র দাখিলের সর্বশেষ	8	১১/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ সকাল ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হতে ১২.০০	C. Qua
	তারিখ ও সময়	°	১৯/০৯/২০২১/৭৯ পদাল ৯.০০ মাচনা ২০০ ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পৰ্যন্ত।	
১৬	জার্থ ও পন্য দরপত্র বাব্স উন্মক্তকরণের	8	যাতদা গাওঁ। ১১/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।	
-0	দরগত্র বান্ধ ওনুতকরণের তারিখ ও সময়	(^é	হয়তহ/২০২২এঃ বুবুষ হ২.৩০ খাচকা।	
10			LL/LL/L_LLANDALL - without	
29	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ	8	১২/০১/২০২১খ্রিঃ ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।	
	ও সময়			
20-	দরপত্রের মেয়াদ/সময়কাল	8	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির ক্রমিক নং-০৫ মোতাবেক।	
			ংযুক্ত থাকবে। এছাড়া এ বিষয়ে আরো কোন তথ্য	
			থে যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে। কোন প্রকার কারণ	
দর্শানো	ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন/সকল দরপ	ত্র গ্রহণ,	/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।	দরপত্রের
				ইহা মহা
			মুহাম্মদ মঞ্জুর হোসেন	
			বিজে-০১৮০১১০০৫১৪	
			সিনিয়র জেল সুপার (ভারপ্রাণ্ড)	
				077(5-
			সিলেট কেন্দ্রীয় কারাগার-০১	এস(২০) জিডি-২০

10, 2021.

abrina M PAGE 3

hough she was working in a government anisation, she gave several interviews the media as the chairman of IKG althcare, according to police. She, however, denied her post as JKG

airman after the scam came to light, lice said.

lenovation M PAGE 3

they did not receive anything in ting.

Dhiraj Bhashkor Nath, a former student the dormitory said, "We went to the ncipal to stop the work and he said it in terrible condition. uld halt for a week, but the work was n resumed in a hurry.'

Md Tito Khan, a student of the college l former human resource development necessary," he said.

Meanwhile, the health ministry the same day (July 12) suspended Dr Sabrina Arif Chowdhury in connection with the case. On June 24, police arrested her husband Ariful and four others for allegedly delivering fake coronavirus test reports without carrying out any test.

secretary of the executive committee of Bangladesh Chhatra League's Kabi Nazrul College Unit said renovation is very necessary at the moment as the washrooms, dining room and bedrooms of students are

"However I also would want the renovation to preserve the building's aesthetics. But the renovation is more

Bangladesh Railway, CRB, Chattogram

Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Controller of Stores (Eastern Zone) Bangladesh Railway, CRB, Ctg

o. COS/Sale/Tender Notice/2016-17

Dated: 27-12-2020

Corrigendum

ত্র দণ্ডর হইতে জারিকৃত দরপত্র বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-২০২০-২১/০৩ তাং-০৮-১২-২০২০ইং এবং ২০২০-২১/০৪ এর ন্তর্ভুক্ত দরপত্রসমূহের স্থানীয় এবং আন্তর্জাতিক স্ক্র্যাপ ডকুমেন্টস এর অনুচ্ছেদ C. Qualification Criteria এর যথাক্রমে মিক ০২ এবং ০৩ নিম্নবর্ণিতভাবে সংশোধন করা হলোঃ

Description	Read	Existing For			
C. Qualification Criteria	2) Minimum amount of liquid	2) Minimum amount of liquid			
	assets in the form of working	assets in the form of working			
	capital or credit lines or a bank	capital or credit lines or a bank			
	statement clearly stating the	statement clearly stating the			
	capability in figure to carry out the	capability in figure to carry out the			
	sale tender of 30% of the quoted	sale tender of 120% of the quoted			
	tender value. Documents must be	tender value. Documents must be			
	submitted along with the tenders.	submitted along with the tenders.			
C. Qualification Criteria	3) Minimum amount of liquid	3) Minimum amount of liquid			
	assets in the form of working	assets in the form of working			
	capital or credit lines or a bank	capital or credit lines or a bank			
	statement clearly stating the	statement clearly stating the			
	capability in figure to carry out the	capability in figure to carry out the			
	sale tender of 30% of the quoted	sale tender of 120% of the quoted			
	tender value. Documents must be	tender value. Documents must be			
	submitted along with the tenders.	submitted along with the tenders.			
দরপত্রের অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।					
ইহা মহাপরিচালক (রেলওয়ে) মহোদয়ের অনুমোদনক্রমে জারি করা হইল।					
	Md. Emdadur Rahman				
	Assist	ant Controller of Stores (HQ)			
এস(২০)(২৩৭)	For-Controller of Stores (East)				

		akunda Road Sub-Division under ne year 2020-2021.
ID- 529467 e-GP/69/EE/CRD/RHD/2020-21	Shape Drain on Emergency Ba	our for Cleaning of Surface Drain/U asis at 1st(p) to 10th(p) Km of gamati National Highway (N-106) uring the year 2020-2021.
mm 28-12-2020		Constant and the second s
মোঃ মহিনুল ইসলাম	সেগুন প্রসাদ বড়য়া	জুলফিকার আহমেদ
পরিচিতি নং-৭০০২৪৪	পরিচিতি নং-৬০২০৭০	পরিচিতি নং-৬০২১৩৮
উপ-সহকারী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ	সহকারী প্রকৌশলী (চঃদাঃ) সওজ	নিৰ্বাহী প্ৰকৌশলী, সওজ
চট্টগ্রাম সড়ক বিভাগ, চট্টগ্রাম	চট্টগ্রাম সড়ক বিভাগ, চট্টগ্রাম	চট্টগ্রাম সড়ক বিভাগ, চট্টগ্রাম
ডি-২০৯১		





সোনাকান্দা, বন্দর, নারায়ণগঞ্জ

ফোনঃ ০২-৭৬৬১০৩৩, ৭৬৬১৪৮০, মোবাইল নং ০১৬৯৭১৯৮৮৭

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ফাইল নং ০৬.০২.৬৭৫৮.১৬৫.০৭.১৯৪.২০.১০১৩

তারিখঃ ২৮ ডিসেম্বর ২০২০

পরামর্শক ও সেবাদানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ডকইয়ার্ড এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ওয়ার্কস লিঃ. বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী, সোনাকান্দা, বন্দর, নারায়ণগঞ্জ এর নিম্নবর্ণিত কার্যক্রম ও শর্ত সাপেক্ষে পরামর্শক ও সেবাদানকারী সংস্থা হিসেবে নিয়োগের জন্য সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আব্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

১। বিএসএমআরএমইউ, বাংলাদেশ এর জন্য একটি ওশানোগ্রাফিক রিসার্চ ভেসেল (ORV) ভাড়ায় সংগ্রহ/পুরাতন ভেসেল ক্রয়/নতুন ভেসেল নির্মাণ করার সম্ভাব্যতা যাচায়ের নিমিত্তে সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন বিশেষায়িত প্রতিষ্ঠানকে একক উৎস ভিত্তিক সরাসরি ক্রয় পদ্ধতি (DPM) প্রয়োগের মাধ্যমে পরামর্শক ও সেবাদানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়োগ করা হবে। এতদ্বিষয়ে সম্ভাব্যতা যাচাই কার্যক্রমে পরামর্শক ও সেবাদানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান এর কার্যপরিধি নিম্নরুপঃ

- ক। বিএসএমআরএমইউ এর জন্য একটি পুরাতন ওশানোগ্রাফিক রিসার্চ ভেসেল ক্রয় (off-theshelf)/নতুন ভেসেল নির্মাণ (New Build)/বিদ্যমান ভেসেল ভাড়া (Chartering) করার সম্ভাব্যতা যাচাই করা
- খ। বিএসএমআরএমইউ এর জন্য একটি ওশানোগ্রাফিক রিসার্চ ভেসেল সংগ্রহের পটভূমি, লক্ষ্য, উদ্দেশ্য, ব্যবহারকারী প্রয়োজনীয়তা নির্ধারণ, বিনির্দেশ তৈরি, বাজার যাচাই, খরচের প্রাক্তলন তৈরী, তুলনামূলক বিশ্লেষণ ইত্যাদি কার্যাদি সম্পাদনের মাধ্যমে সম্ভাব্যতার বিস্তারিত প্রতিবেদন প্রদান।
- গ। ORV ক্রয়/নির্মাণ/ভাড়া করার বিষয়ে বিশেষায়িত ও একক উৎস ভিত্তিক প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে বিএসএমআরএমইউকে সম্ভাব্যতা যাচাই এর কার্যক্রমে পরামর্শ ও সেবা প্রদান করা।
- ORV সংগ্রহের নিমিত্তে সম্ভাব্যতা যাচাই এর কার্যক্রমে পরামর্শক ও সেবাদানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে ঘ। বিএসএমআরএমইউ এর পক্ষে দেশী/বিদেশী সংস্থা/সত্নার সাথে যোগাযোগ, সমন্বয়, বাজার যাচাই, নেগোসিয়েশন, তথ্য উপাত্ত সংগ্রহে, প্রয়োজনীয় ক্ষেত্রে MOU করার পদক্ষেপ গ্রহণ করা ও অন্যান্য কার্যাদি সম্পাদন করা
- ঙ। এ বিষয়ে Expert/Consultant হিসেবে উন্মুক্ত দেশী/বিদেশী সংস্থাকে আপনাদের Partner হিসেবে নেওয়ার বিষয়টি বিবেচনা করা যেতে পারে।
- সম্ভাব্যতার যাচাই এর আলোকে সুপারিশ মোতাবেক এবং সরকারি নীতিগত সিদ্ধান্তের আলোকে ORV Σı ক্রয়/নির্মাণ/ভাড়া করার জন্য পরবর্তীতে পৃথকভাবে DPP প্রণয়ন করা হবে।
- উক্ত কাজে অংশগ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক পরামর্শক ও সেবাদানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানগণকে বাৎসরিক ফিস উল্লেখপূর্বক/প্রয়োজনীয় २। তথ্যপত্রাদিসহ আগামী ১১ জানুয়ারি ২০২১ তারিখ বেলা ১২.১৫ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ডিইডব্লিউ লিঃ এর প্রধান ফটকে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বক্সে অথবা ডাক/কুরিয়ার যোগে দরপত্র প্রেরণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। ঐ দিনই দুপুর ১২.৩০ ঘটিকায় উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকে) দরপত্র খোলা হবে। ডিইডব্রিউ লিঃ কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন সময় দরপত্র গ্রহণ/ বাতিল ও সংশোধন করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

জিডি-২০৬৭

পক্ষে ম্যানেজিং ডাইরেক্টর

COUNTRY

10 Years into Encroachment of Centuries Old Temple Ex-MP's sons still have grasp on Teknaf's first Buddhist temple

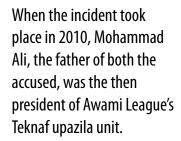
SANJOY KUMAR BARUA

The law of the land is quite strict against hurting the sentiment of any religious community or any action that threatens communal harmony.

But in Hnila union of Teknaf, the authorities never took any action against the individuals who demolished and encroached on a 200-year-old Buddhist temple that had an iconic tin-roofed wooden structure.

When the incident took place in 2010, Mohammad Ali, the father of both the accused, was the then president of Awami League's Teknaf upazila unit. Mohammad Ali was a lawmaker with AL ticket in Cox's Bazar-4 (Ukhia-Teknaf) constituency, from 1996 to 2001. He passed away on November 13 this year.

One of Mohammad Ali's sons, Rashed Mahmud Ali, was a leader of



Bangladesh Chhatra League in Hnila in 2010. He is now the chairman of Hnila Union Parishad (UP) and also the president of AL in the same union.

In August 27 that year, henchmen of Rashed and his brother Mahbub Morshed forcibly took possession of 11 acres of land belonging to Dakkhin



The iconic tin-roofed wooden structure of Dakkhin Hnila Boro Bouddha Vihar, in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar, which was razed to the ground in 2010. Right, the 150-year-old Buddha statue, made of octo-alloy, is still kept in the Ordination Hall of the temple compound. PHOTO: SANJOY KUMAR BARUA, COLLECTED

Buddhist temple in Teknaf upazila. to the ground by the offenders.

Before desecrating and plundering around 18 priceless and ancient Buddha statues kept inside the temple, the goons physically assaulted and drove away the monks from there too, said Kyaw Zaw Aung, secretary of the temple.

He also said he and other monks went into hiding after the attackers issued life threats on them for protesting the grabbing of the temple's land.

The attackers however did not demolish the temple's Ordination

Hnila Boro Bouddha Vihar, the first Hall -- a separate tin-roofed structure in the compound -- where a massive The temple's main building was razed 150-year-old Buddha statue, made of octo-alloy or Ashtadhatu, is still situated.

Buddhist devotees later recovered a smaller and damaged stone statue as well as a footprint of the Buddha and stored both in the Ordination Hall along with the octo-alloy statue.

Thousands of Buddhist devotees used to gather at the temple every year to celebrate religious festivals as it is Teknaf upazila's first Buddhist temple and it houses a Buddha statue that is around one and a half centuries old, said Kyaw Zaw Aung, the temple secretary.

Burglars had detached and stolen small parts from the statue despite it being under close watch of the monks. But now, when it has been lying unprotected, they might succeed in stealing the entire statue, he feared.

In an effort to get the possession of the temple's land back from the clutch of the encroachers, the Buddhist devotees from the area in 2011 submitted at least six petitions to different offices at the local administration as well as a memorandum to the prime minister's office via the deputy commissioner (DC) of Cox's Bazar. "But no one helped us protect this historical temple," lamented Kyaw Zaw.

The grabbers completely destroyed the historical temple where our forefathers prayed; we prayed. We want our temple back," said septuagenarian Aung Kyaw Rakhine, a resident of the area.

City

During a recent visit to the area, this correspondent came across a man who was cutting earth from near the temple site. "It was a historical temple in Teknaf upazila where thousands of devotees from across the country gathered every year... but now it belongs to Rashed chairman and his brother Mahbub," the man said identifying himself as Monir Ahmed. This paper has obtained a copy of

an investigation report dated May 3, relevant documents.

2011. In the report ANM Nazim Uddin, the then Teknaf Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), recommended that the grabbers be evicted from the land that belongs to the Buddhist temple.

Asked about the report, ANM Nazim Uddin, currently the deputy secretary of fisheries and livestock ministry, said "I might have given [opinion in] the investigation report after visiting the temple site in Teknaf, where I served as a UNO between 2009 and 2012."

Shyamal Mitra Barua, deputy director of Buddhist Religious Welfare Trust, said after visiting the temple site in 2012, he found evidence that the temple and its statues were vandalised by former MP Mohammad Ali and his sons.

He also said although he mentioned it in his report submitted to the religious affairs ministry, "no steps were taken to protect the historical temple".

Asked, Md Nurul Islam, secretary to the religious affairs ministry, said they would take the matter seriously and launch an investigation to find out whether their officials overlooked the allegation of the encroachment and vandalism

Contacted, Hnila UP Chairman Rashed Mahmud Ali said, "My father took the temple's land from a former monk of the temple via a notary public [deed] in 2001. We later planted trees there... We will return the land if we made any mistake."

After the attention of Cox's Bazar DC (Revenue) Md Amin Al Parvege was drawn on the issue of encroachment and vandalising of the temple in Hnila, he said he would take necessary action after reviewing

Health watchdog remains invisible

FROM PAGE 1

But the picture is different for other committees. Different parliamentary bodies held at least 132 meetings since late March.

According to JS procedure rules, a standing committee must meet at least once a month.

There are 39 parliamentary standing committees that are supposed to examine bills, review different activities of the ministry concerned, enquire into irregularities, and make recommendations.

MP Muhibur Rahman Manik, a member of the standing committee on health ministry, said they have contacted the committee chief about media reports on the committee's lack of initiatives.

"We cannot call for meetings. The committee chief can," he added.

Committee Chairman Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim said he couldn't hold meetings because the committee members live in different places.

"After holding a meeting on March 24, we had fixed a date for the next meeting. But that could not happen due to the countrywide lockdown from late March." he told The Daily Star.

the ruling Awami League.

Asked whether he will call for a meeting soon, he said he would talk to the committee members in this regard. Over 7,300 people have died with

Covid-19 and more than five lakh got infected in the country. Hundreds of new cases are still being

detected every day in Bangladesh. On top of the government's initial mishandling of the situation, mismanagement and irregularities made the battle against the outbreak more difficult.

Reports of misappropriation of money during procurement of medical equipment became common. Fraudulent activities by Regent Hospital and JKG Health Care over tests and resignation of former director general of Directorate General of Health Services added fuel to the fire.

But none of these could draw the ttention of the health watchdog.

As the government is procuring vaccines and taking preparations to tackle a possible surge of infections in winter, the role of the JS body becomes all too crucial.

on health ministry. Contacted, Speaker of the Jativa

About the meetings of other committees, she said maybe they have the courage to hold the meeting, but the committee members of the health ministry may still feel unsafe to come out and hold meetings.

"A few members and chairmen have expressed such concerns. Given the situation, we cannot insist anyone to come and hold a meeting despite the health concerns.

The speaker said some standing committee chairmen have sought ermission to hold meetings virtually.

"But the rules of procedure of our parliament does not mention anything about it. It's a new and unanticipated thing. That's why we haven't made a decision yet," she said.

"I am trying to look into how the privacy of the meetings would be ensured and what parliaments in other countries are doing.

Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said it's shocking and surprising for people to see the indifference of the JS committee



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Aviation & Aerospace University Temporary Office: Old Airport, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh.

RE-REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

applicable) qualifications. Consultant will be selected in accordance with PPA/2006 and PPR/2008 and Public Procurement Procedures issued GOB with its updated amendment. b) Interested consultant may obtain further information at the address below during office hour. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOI without assigning any reason whatsoever. d) EOI shall submitted in sealed envelope, delivered to the address of the undersigned. Association with foreign is : Encouraged EOI Detail Information Encouraged Ref No Phasing of Services Location SSMRAAU/Registrar-172/2020/76 NA BSMRAAU Liaison Office, Old Airport, Tejgaon, Dhaka. 29/12/2020 PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS Image: Service	No: BSMRAAU/Registra	r-172	/2020/76						Date:	29/12/2020
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maksud8615@bsmraau.edu.bd Address of the Office Inviting EOI : BSMRAAU, Liaison Office, Old Airport, Tejgaon, Dhaka. Email Address of Office Inviting EOI : registrar@bsmraau.edu.bd,	Designation of Official	Inviti	ing EOI		:	Group Ca	tain Md Maksudul Alam,	064		
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Bogistrar					:			javii, Liidka.		
GD- 2083 GD- 2083 Aviation & Aerospace University										nan

Later, we couldn't hold meetings as
many officials and security personnel of
parliament tested positive for Covid-19.
We are waiting to see whether the
Covid-19 situation becomes normal,"
said Selim, also a presidium member of
····· , ···· F ···· · · · · ·

Sangsad Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury said she would talk to the chief of the parliamentary body concerned.

"Let's see what can be done," she told The Daily Star.

inactive and ineffective, he told The Daily Star.

But the committee on the health ministry should not be so indifferent at a time of a national crisis, he said.

							(d). Guideline of opti	
	~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~		•	Uaii umrah			(e). Carry out differe	nt surveys ar
-	🔁 দুৰ্নীতি দ	1ম•	ৰ কমিশন 🎑	Hajj, umrah			(f). Summarized rela	ated infrastruc
4	প্রধান ব	কাৰ্যাল	ায়, ঢাকা	FROM PAGE 12 trial in the country even if			(g). Feasibility Study w for preparation of BSM	
		.acc.	org.bd	they commit any offence in			(h). Project cost estimati	
	মুক্ত বাংলাদেশ"			Saudi Arabia.			() )	9
দুদ			নটওয়ার্ক (ল্যান) স্থাপনসহ আনুষঙ্গিক রপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি	Mentioning that Saudi Arabia has changed the hajj management system in			(j). Preparation of DPP be ensured as needed.	
যাবক ন	अन्त्र गर्भग १-००.०১.००००.১৭৬.৩৫.००७.२०-७२०४৮	• •()	ম <b>ান । নত্যাও</b> তারিখঃ ২৮/১২/২০২০	2011, the cabinet secretary			(k). Preparation of IE	E. EIA. SIA.
2		:	ভায়েশঃ ২৮/১২/২০২০ দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন।	said India, Pakistan,			., .	
<u>ې</u>	এজেন্সি	·	দুনাত বন্ধ বন্ধন	Malaysia and Indonesia			(I). Study about scope	
৾	সংগ্রাহক সন্তার নাম		প্রকল্প পরিচালক, দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন শক্তিশালীকরণ প্রকল্প।	framed laws.			of research in aviation	and aerospac
8	সংগ্রাহক সন্তার কোড নং		228288000	He said no one without			(m). Any other relevant	t task in light o
¢	সংগ্রাহক সন্তার জেলা	:	। কাৰ্য	registration under the			(,	
5	যে কাজের জন্য দরপত্র	:	দুদকের সকল অফিসে লোকাল এরিয়া নেটওয়ার্ক (ল্যান)	law could deal with any			(n). All reports and do	
•			স্থাপনসহ আনুষঙ্গিক ক্রয়।	haji (hajj pilgrim) and	Experience, Resources	:	(a). Background of the	he firm with E
٩	দরপত্র সূত্র নং	:	00.03.0000.395.000.20-02089	the authorities concerned	and Delivery Capacity Required		(b). Adequate experie	inco of the firr
br	তারিখ	:	28/32/2020	could take action against	I Vequileu		engineering design, dr	
\$	সংগ্ৰহ পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র (OTM)	anomalies.			and aerospace unive	
30	বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	:	প্রকল্পের বরাদ্দকৃত অর্থ।	According to the				, ,
22	স্ট্যান্ডার্ড টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট বিক্রয়ের গুরুর তারিখ	:	28/22/2020	proposed law, the			(c). Adequate experien	
১২	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	১৯/০১/২০২১ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।	registration of any hajj			of smart, sustainable a	and eco-mendi
১৩	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	২০/০১/২০২১ তারিখ সকাল ১১:০০ ঘটিকা।	or umrah agency can be			(d). The firm should ha	ive good amou
\$8	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	:	প্রকল্প পরিচালক, দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়,	cancelled for anomalies.			()	0
			ঢাকার অফিস কক্ষে আগামী ২০/০১/২০২১ তারিখ সকাল	Besides, a hajj agency could			(e). Particular experi	
			১১:১৫ ঘটিকায় দরপত্র উন্মুক্তকরণ কমিটি কর্তৃক	be fined maximum Tk			university is highly p	referred) and
			দরপত্রদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন)	50 lakh, while an umrah			(g). Specific experier	nce in nrenar
			খোলা হবে।	agency could be slapped			any University/Institu	
ንራ	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান/দপ্তর	:	প্রকল্প পরিচালক, দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন শক্তিশালীকরণ,	maximum Tk 15 lakh for				
			দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা।	irregularities, said Anwarul.			(h). Availability &	
১৬	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান/দণ্ডর	:	প্রকল্প পরিচালক, দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন শক্তিশালীকরণ,	If any agency gets			institute/university de specialist and archited	
		<u> </u>	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা।	warning in two consecutive			international resource	
29	প্রতিসেট দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	:	প্রতিসেট স্ট্যান্ডার্ড টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্টের অফেরতযোগ্য মূল্য	years, its registration would				
			২,০০০/- (দুই হাজার) টাকা। দরপত্রের সাথে দরপত্র জামানত হিসেবে যে কোন বাণিজ্যিক	automatically be suspended			(j). Up-to-date Trade Lic	ense, TIN certi
20-	দরপত্রের নিরাপত্তা জামানত	*		for two years, he added.			(Ic) Minimum 02 (the	
			ব্যাংক (সিডিউল ব্যাংক) হতে ৩,৫০,০০০/- (তিন লক্ষ পঞ্চাশ হাজার) টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার 'প্রকল্প	Besides, lawsuits can be	Other Details (if		(k). Minimum 03 (three Consultants may as	
			াক্ষণ হাজায়) চাকায় ব্যাংক জ্রাকচ/বো-অভায় একর পরিচালক, দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন শক্তিশালীকরণ প্রকল্প এর	filed for criminal offences	applicable)	·	qualifications. Consu	
			সারচালক, দুনাও দমন কামনন নাওলালাকরণ প্রকল্প এর অনুকুলে দাখিল করতে হবে। অন্যথায় দরপত্র সরাসরি	committed in hajj and			GOB with its update	
			বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।	umrah management, said			The Procuring Entity	y reserves th
১৯	দরপত্রের বৈধতার মেয়াদ	:	দাখিলকৃত দরপত্রের কার্যকারিতা (Tender Validity)	the cabinet secretary.	Acception with ford		submitted in sealed	envelope, de
_			দরপ্রস্তাব খোলার তারিখ হতে ১২০ (একশত বিশ) দিন	According to the law, if	Association with foreign firms is	*	Encouraged	
			পর্যন্ত বহাল থাকবে।	any hajj-related anomaly is	EOI Detail Information			
২০	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা ও প্রয়োজনীয় দলিলাদি	:	দুদকের সকল অফিসে লোকাল এরিয়া নেটওয়ার্ক (ল্যান)	committed even in Saudi	Ref No		Phasing of	of Services
			স্থাপনসহ আনুযঙ্গিক সেবা সরবরাহকারী প্রকৃত প্রতিষ্ঠান,	Arabia by Bangladeshi,	BSMRAAU/Registrar-172	/202	0/76 N	NA .
			দরদাতাকে দরপত্রের সাথে স্ট্যান্ডার্ড টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট এ	it could be treated as if it	PROCURING ENTITY DI	ETAI	LS	
			উল্লেখিত শর্তাবলী অনুসারে ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ভ্যাট, টিআইএন	happened in Bangladesh	Name of Official Inviting EOI			AIR COM
			সার্টিফিকেট, আয়কর পরিশোধের প্রত্যয়নপত্রসহ আনুষঙ্গিক	and legal steps could be	Designation of Official I	nviti	ng EOI :	
			কাগজপত্র সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।	taken in the country, he said.	Contact Details		:	Group Ca Project Di
২১	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর নাম	:	মোহাম্মদ আব্দুল আওয়াল।	He mentioned that the				maksud86
২২	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর পদবী	:	পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব) এবং প্রকল্প পরিচালক, দুর্নীতি	religious affairs ministry	Address of the Office Invitir			BSMRAA
		<u> </u>	দমন কমিশন শক্তিশালীকরণ প্রকল্প।	placed the bill in the	Email Address of Office Inviti	ng E(	) :	registrar@
২৩	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর ঠিকানা	:	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ১, সেগুনবাগিচা, ঢাকা।	Cabinet in line with a				
२8	দরপত্র আহবানকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগের	:	02-65036896	directive of the Cabinet				
~~	বিবরণ	·		issued in 2012 to enact a				
~			1	law instead of the existing	GD- 2083			
জিডি-২৫				policy.	00 2000			

#### INTERNATIONAL

# S Africa hits 1m cases

Detects new Covid variant; Trump signs virus relief and spending package

#### AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa logged its millionth case of Covid-19 and South Korea yesterday became the latest country to detect the new coronavirus variant, as the pandemic showed no signs of letting up.

Global infections have raced past 80 million with nearly 1.8 million deaths, even as vaccination drives gather pace in North America and Europe, with a top US expert warning that the pandemic might get even worse in the coming weeks.

The explosion of cases worldwide in recent weeks has prompted the return of many unpopular restrictions,

including some lockdowns, and concerns have grown after the detection of a new virus variant experts believe could be more transmissible.

South Africa became the first African nation to log one million cases, official data showed Sunday, as authorities considered reimposing restrictions to battle a second wave of infections driven by the new variant.

South Korea became the latest nation vesterday to detect the variant, in three individuals of a London-based family who arrived in the country last week.

The new variant was first detected in travel spreads the coronavirus.

Britain, and made its way to a number of other nations including Japan and Canada, prompting dozens of governments -including European nations -- to impose travel restrictions on the UK.

Most European countries began their vaccination campaigns over the weekend, boosting hopes of an end to the pandemic,

especially in some of the hardest-hit parts of the continent.

US cases have been surging at an alarming rate in recent months. The world's largest economy has added at least one million new cases per week since early November, according to Johns Hopkins University data.

But there was some relief for Americans Sunday when President Donald Trump finally signed a \$900 billion stimulus bill, a long-awaited boost for millions of people whose livelihoods have been battered by the pandemic.

While the United States has also begun vaccinations, experts have said that because of the expected surge in cases over the Christmas holidays, the situation could get much worse.

Top US government scientist Anthony Fauci warned Sunday that the worst of the pandemic may be yet to come, driving the United States to a "critical point" as holiday



Farmers burn posters of the Reliance Jio telecommunications company as they protest against corporate businesses during a demonstration against the central government's recent agricultural reforms, on the outskirts of Amritsar, India yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

# **KILLING OF LABOURERS IN KASHMIR** Indian cops charge army officer, civilian REUTERS, Srinagar

Indian police in Kashmir filed charges against an army officer and a civilian for allegedly killing three labourers and planting weapons to pass them off as militants, in a rare indictment of the military fighting an insurgency in the region.

The three labourers were killed in July after what the Indian army had initially said was a gun battle that started after militants fired at security forces in Amshipora village in southern Kashmir.

But Kashmir police, who come under the direct control of the central government in New Delhi, said in a press release on Sunday that their investigation showed the labourers "were murdered" by an army captain and two civilians - one of whom turned state's evidence.

"They planted illegally acquired weapons and material on their dead bodies after stripping them of their identities," police said, adding that the accused had "deliberately and purposefully" chosen not to follow standard operating procedures.

The Indian army declined to comment on the police statement on Sunday. In an update last week, an army spokesman said that it was progressing with its own investigation, adding that the army was "committed to ethical conduct of operations."

Rights groups have long accused the Indian army of violating human rights in Kashmir, a Muslim majority region that is claimed in full by both India and Pakistan, but ruled in part by both.

# Weather disasters cost \$150b in 2020

Says report, reveals long-term impact of global warming

AFP, Paris

The ten costliest weather disasters worldwide this year saw insured damages worth \$150 billion, topping the figure for 2019 and reflecting a long-term impact of global warming, according to a report vesterday.

The same disasters claimed at least 3,500 lives and displaced more than 13.5 million people.

From Australia's out-of-control wildfires in January to a record number of Atlantic hurricanes through November, the true cost of the year's climate-enhanced calamities was in fact far higher because most losses were uninsured.

Not surprisingly, the burden fell disproportionately on poor nations, according to the annual tally from global NGO Christian Aid, entitled "Count the cost of 2020: a year of climate breakdown".

Only four percent of economic

events in low-income countries were before manmade global warming insured, compared with 60 percent began to mess with the planet's in high-income economies, the report climate system. said, citing a study last month in The



"Whether floods in Asia, locusts

But more than a century of temperature and precipitation data, along with decades of satellite data on hurricanes and sea level rise, have left no doubt that Earth's warming surface temperature is amplifying their impact.

Massive tropical storms -- variously known as hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones -- are now more likely, for example, to be stronger, last longer, carry more water and wander beyond their historical range.

2020's record-breaking 30 named Atlantic hurricanes -- with at least 400 fatalities and \$41 billion in damages -suggest the world could see more such storms as well.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) had to use Greek symbols after running out of

#### **NEWS IN BRIEF**

#### Saudi activist jailed for 5 years, 8 months

A Saudi court yesterday sentenced prominent activist Loujain al-Hathloul to five years and eight months in prison for terrorism-related crimes, according to local media allowed to attend her trial. The women's rights activist was convicted of "various activities prohibited by the anti-terrorism law", the pro-government online outlet Sabq and other media cited the court as saying. It added that the court suspended two years and 10 months of the sentence. United Nations human rights experts have called the charges against her spurious, and along with leading rights groups and lawmakers in the United States and Europe have called for her release. Rights groups and her family say Hathloul, who had championed women's right to drive and for ending the kingdom's male guardian system, was subjected to abuse, including electric shocks, waterboarding, flogging and sexual assault.



**Pfizer delays vaccine** 

# Lancet.

in Africa, or storms in Europe and the Americas, climate change has continued to rage in 2020," said Christian Aid's climate policy lead, Kat Kramer.

Extreme weather disasters, of losses from climate-impacted extreme course, have plagued humanity long letters in the Latin alphabet.





Protesters take part in a torch rally after the parliament was dissolved and general elections were announced to be held in April and May, more than a year ahead of schedule, in Kathmandu, Nepal yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

# post-Brexit trade deal

EU member states endorse

AFP, Brussels

The 27 EU member states yesterday gave the green light for the post-Brexit trade deal to go into effect on January 1, a spokesman said.

Ambassadors from EU capitals met in Brussels to nod through the accord, using a procedure which will take effect at 3:00 pm (1400 GMT) today.

This will provisionally allow tariff-free trade with Britain to continue after it leaves the EU single market at the New Year.

Sebastian Fischer, spokesman for the German presidency of the EU, said: "EU Ambassadors have unanimously approved the provisional application of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement."

The member states' adoption of the plan allows it to come into effect in time to head off disruption of cross-Channel trade.

But the deal must still be ratified retrospectively by the European Parliament, probably in late February

Meanwhile, Britain's cabinet office minister Michael Gove said yesterday most British businesses have made preparations for the end of the Brexit transition period, , adding it was important they were ready for changes to trading and regulatory rules.

Asked if businesses were ready for the end of the transition period on December 31, when Britain finally leaves the European Union's customs union and single market, Gove said: "Yes. The overwhelming majority of businesses have been getting ready, absolutely."

#### deliveries to 8 EU nations

Pfizer has postponed the delivery of new batches of its coronavirus vaccine to eight European nations including Spain, the Spanish health ministry said yesterday, a day after the EU began its immunisation campaign. The Spanish branch of Pfizer informed Madrid on Sunday night of the delay in shipments to the eight nations due to a "problem in the loading and shipment process" at its plant in Belgium, the health ministry said in a statement. It did not specify which European nations aside from Spain were affected.Pfizer has informed the ministry that the problem "was already resolved" but the next delivery of vaccines "will be a few hours late" and arrive in Spain on Tuesday, a day later than expected, the statement said.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

### 'Hong Kong 12' begins US urges release of the dissidents AFP, Shenzhen

The trial in China of a group of Hong Kong prodemocracy activists who tried to escape the city by speedboat for sanctuary in Taiwan opened yesterday, as the United States urged the immediate release of dissidents it says "fled tyranny"

Ten of the so-called "Hong Kong 12" were in court in the southern city of Shenzhen facing charges linked to an illegal border crossing.

Chinese authorities took them into custody after their boat was intercepted on August 23.

The hearing began as scheduled vesterday afternoon, AFP understands, and was likely to run into the evening.

But court officials would confirm nothing about the case and the trial -- like many in China's opaque legal system -- was not open to foreign reporters or diplomats.

# China trial of | CLASHES BETWEEN TURKISH-LED TSNA, SDF 9,500 flee homes in northeast Syria

Aljazeera Online

At least 9,500 people have fled their homes in Ain Issa, northeast Syria, following an escalation in clashes between the Turkish-backed Syrian National Army (TSNA) and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in mid-December.

The SDF - the military forces of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES), also known as Rojava - who control Ain Issa, report daily shelling on the city from Turkish-backed forces for the past week. The sound of fighting could be heard from sunset until Sunday noon.

Ain Issa sits approximately 45km (28 miles) by road from Tel Abyad, a city flanking the Turkish border and captured in Óctober 2019 during Ankara's Operation Peace Spring.

Operation Peace Spring was launched following the abrupt withdrawal of United States troops from Syria to secure a so-called safe-zone on Turkey's border by clearing the region of People's Protection Units (YPG) fighters.

The SDF is comprised of the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), which Turkey considers to be linked to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

Labelled a "terrorist" organisation by Turkey, the US and the European Union, the PKK has waged an armed uprising against the Turkish state since the 1980s.

The Turkish government stated the safe-zone would span 32km (20 miles) deep from the Turkish border into Syria and 444km (276 miles) wide from the Euphrates River to Iraq in order to settle up to two million Syrian refugees currently hosted by Turkey.

The operation resulted in Turkey capturing the cities of Tel Abyad and Ras al-Ain near its border and controlling an area 20km deep into Syria.



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#### **RIGHTS ADVOCACY**

# Vaccination is health right not a privilege

#### LAW WATCH

# **Revisiting the** discourse of gendering crime

#### M S SIDDIOUI

angladesh's Globe Biotech is the only company, globally, to be listed with three vaccine candidates – DNA plasmid vaccine, Adenovirus Type 5 Vector and D614G variant LNP-encapsulated mRNA and other companies have one or two varieties. The candidature of the Globe Biotech vaccine has been shown on the WHO list as a DNA plasmid type vaccine at the preclinical stage.

A Nepalese company Anmol Healthcare Ltd has placed order to buy two million shots of vaccine developed by Bangladeshi company Globe Biotech Ltd after it passes trials. However, Bangladesh government is yet to announce any plan to buy local vaccine. Government has set to import some three crore doses whenever available.

There is a debate all over the world on who should have been at the top of the list to get priority for Corona vaccine. Traditionally, first in line for a scarce vaccine should be the health workers and the people most vulnerable to the infection.

Some experts have already developed draft guidelines for the deployment of early vaccines and proposed a framework for the equitable distribution of any vaccine. These guidelines mostly focus on using the vaccine to protect individuals as targets of the virus, as opposed to using vaccination to slow viral transmission.

An advisory group of the WHO has proposed focusing on the protection of older and more vulnerable people, essential health-care workers and groups in dense urban environments. Another group of experts opined that the less prevalent the virus is, the less that vulnerable people need protecting. Some epidemiological research

The treatment or preventive vaccine is not privilege but a human right. It should only be there on equitable basis and not on the basis of some priorities, it should be there for the needy regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion.

> suggests that vaccinating the most vulnerable may not be the right thing to do.

> A modeling study (2009) on vaccination strategies for influenza concluded that the optimal policy should be on the basis of various measures including deaths and economic costs and a number of other things. If the vaccine apparently immunises only around 50 percent of those vaccinated. then focusing on the most vulnerable was the best strategy. With low vaccine efficacy, even vaccinating most of the population would not be able to prevent continued viral spreading, and so the vulnerable would need direct protection.

even unprotected — far less likely to be exposed to the virus. It also came up in the study as to how many doses of the vaccine were available. If few doses were available, it would be best to vaccinate the most vulnerable. If there were enough doses to vaccinate a decent fraction of the population, then targeting the spreaders would be a better idea, as the achieved immunity level could eliminate viral spreading, although the required fraction depended on how easily the virus could transmit. This study was for influenza, not the novel coronavirus, so its conclusions can only be suggestive.

Management Taskforce has prepared a draft list of ten groups and professions and placed for approval of higher authority. If it is approved, a selected number of people of some profession and group will get the first shots from the 3 crore vaccine doses being procured by Bangladesh.

The largest group to get the Covid-19 vaccine is the people aged sixty and above, which includes residents of old homes and religious leaders. In the initial phase, 4.5 lakh government sector health workers and seven lakh private sector health workers will get the vaccine. Another 1.5 lakh health management and support workers,



The comparisons between data emanated from both the 1918 and 1957 influenza epidemics, the latter of which was more coronavirus-like, with fatalities among older people. The researchers found that the best strategy is to target the most vulnerable and vaccinating the younger people and children to reduce viral transmission. There is no published study so far on current coronavirus. It should be noted that protection is only one part of vaccination.

Canada has identified key populations that also include health care workers, caregivers in long-term care facilities and all essential front-line responders essential in managing the COVID-19 response. People who are unable to work remotely and are at risk of exposure, such as police, firefighters and grocery store staff, are also among the key groups in consideration.

The National Academy of Medicine of USA report proposes regarding distribution of vaccine in four phases as it becomes available. The first recipients are obvious picks: healthcare workers, emergency responders, people with underlying conditions, and older adults living in group settings.

WHO recommends that priority be given to people who score high on the Social Vulnerability Index, which identifies factors such as poverty, lack of access to transportation, or crowded housing that are linked to poor health system. The goal is to rectify the pandemic's disproportionate burden on minorities and poor people and to work toward a new commitment to promote health equity.

including employees of various government and private hospitals. Besides, 5.5 lakh Bangladesh Police personnel will get the shots, with a priority on traffic police officials.

Among others, three lakh front liners of the Bangladesh Army, 50,000 journalists and 5,000 civil surgeons, deputy commissioners, and ministry officials will be vaccinated. The vaccine will be distributed to 2.10 lakh Freedom Fighters as well. Moreover, there will be in line, 70,000 public representatives including members of Parliament, chairpersons and members of Upazila and Union Parishads. Depending on the availability of the vaccine shots, it will gradually be distributed to immunocompromised people, sufferers from chronic diseases, teaching professionals, and public transportation workers.

The policy and plan have not mentioned whether the government has given priority to the prevention of corona or reduction of spread of virus. The primary vaccine program is set for 1.5 crore people or 9% of the population and ten categories of professions and groups. All other countries have common policy of priority to elderly persons and frontline medical professionals.

The treatment or preventive vaccine is

on the basis of some priorities, it should be

there for the needy regardless of race, colour,

opinion, national or social origin, property,

not privilege but a human right. It should

only be there on equitable basis and not

religion, sex, language, political or other

birth or other status.

### FARZANA AKTHER aws are meant to regulate the behavior of human beings with the conformity of equality, equity, ✓ fairness and justice. Though legal regimes in South Asian countries greatly attributed to religious, social, cultural repercussions towards a set of norms, sometimes the execution of these rules revolve only around the weaker gender of society. That masculine conundrum of

abiding rules sometimes caused dismay among fellow citizens. If we gaze at the platitudes of ethical discourse, the conclusion often reaches to one point of convergence that is 'morality cannot be subjective, it must have some objective connotation'. In our country's perspective, if we think morality as a product of some ethical, religious and idyllic thoughts, it has also some neutral standing stone to placate the sense of justice. The submissive and subjugating approach by assumed dominant gender towards the weaker gender of society in regards to crime cause anarchy. This subliminal non-legal aspect of crime should be initiated in the discourse of socio-psychological causation of crime.

Recently, a video went viral in social media showing a female was smoking in the public place of Rajshahi City. On that place, many other males were also smoking. But this particular woman was humiliated for not being a violator of law but being a 'woman' smoking in public. So lets' stare for a moment at the relevant law applicable in this situation. Bangladesh became a Party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on February 27, 2005. Mandated by constitutional provision of improving public health as a primary duty, the government enacted "Smoking and Using of Tobacco Products (control) Act 2005". According to section 4 of the Act, it is prohibited to smoke in public places and public vehicles. Section 4 also made it a penal offence by imposing fine. The language of this section is clear enough to trace and does not implicate any gender prerogatives. Interestingly, in that viral video, the scolding males were dispersing ponderous ethics toward the female when they think the same deviant act as quite right for them because they are the 'Alpha Male'!

A close perusal of religious scriptures in this regard also suggested gender-neutral directives to follow. Neither Law nor religion opens up the venture to interpret rules with the prism of patriarchy. It is the subconscious dominant features of distorted masculinity that determine the unjust thinking line of right and wrong. According to marginalisation theory of female criminality, inducing women to a constant marginalised position as a victim or as a perpetrator is self-derogatory. When socialisation process makes women a second sex and tries to hold them as downcast, women become more prone to violating the norms.

Moreover, the strain model of crime causation propounded by famous socio-criminologist Robert K Marton suggested that when there is no junction between the cultural goals and institutionalised means, retreatism and revolution arises to support the new norms. Fluctuation in the moral dimension of 'Gender' in our country creates unnecessary strain on some of the classes of citizens. If a particular social structure is inherently unequal or there is unequal execution of social norms or legal rules, this may change the individual perceptions as to means and opportunities Role of male or female in preventing crime should be complementary to each other. Uneven gender notion should not be utilised to hold one as a victim or a perpetrator. It is the high time to replace our notion of 'gender' by equitable cultural ethics.

High vaccine effectiveness makes it possible to greatly curtail viral spread, 

In Bangladesh, the Covid-19 Vaccine

#### LAW OPINION

THE WRITER IS LECTURER, DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS, UNIVERSITY OF ASIA PACIFIC.

# **GLOBAL LAW UPDATES** Headscarf ban held unconstitutional in Austria

ustria's constitutional court has struck down a law prohibiting primary school children from wearing specific head coverings having religious significance. This judgment is significant since it makes it clear that bans cannot ensure self-determination for women and girls, as much as impositions cannot. Both impositions and bans militate against free choice of women, and their freedom of expression. The court said that since the law was aimed at the Islamic headscarf, it breached rights having bearing on religious freedom.

The court said the law could lead to the marginalisation of Muslim girls. It also rejected the government's argument that the prohibition could protect girls from social pressures from classmates, saying that it penalised the wrong people. It further said, if necessary, the State needed to draw up legislation to better prevent bullying on the grounds of gender or religion.



The legislation, which came into force last year, did not specify that headscarves were banned but instead proscribed the wearing of "religious clothing that is associated with a covering of the head" for children up to the age of 10. The government had itself said that head coverings worn by Sikh boys or the Jewish skullcap would not be affected.

The court decided that the ban was in fact aimed at Muslim headscarves. "The selective ban... applies exclusively to Muslim schoolgirls and thereby separates them in a discriminatory manner from other pupils," court President Christoph Grabenwarter observed.

-LAW DESK (SOURCE: BBC.COM).

# The dynamics of Rohingya relocation under 'internal relocation alternative'

THE WRITER IS LEGAL ECONOMIST.

#### SAKHAWAT SAIIAT SEIAN

nternal relocation alternative is one of the doctrines recently developed to determine refugee or asylum seeker status in a host country. It basically examines whether the asylum seeker has exhausted all his opportunities of relocation in his country of origin during status seeking. This principle is also considered as an alternative of phrases i.e. 'well-founded fear of persecution' or 'unable to avail protection in his country of origin' under article 1A(2) of the Refugee Convention 1951 during the determination of refugee status. We can expand the doctrine from country of origin to the territory of host country. If the asylum seekers are already in the host country with minimum chances of repatriation 'internal relocation alternative' might function as a benefactor of principle of non-refoulment. UNHCR has recognised 'internal relocation alternative' in its handbooks and it may examine the expansion of this principle in the host countries as well

For example, Bangladesh has given refuge to 1 million Rohingyas since 2017. After a lot of bilateral and multilateral steps, repatriation could not take place due primarily to the Rohingya's unwillingness to return and Myanmar's inadvertent approach to them take back. As a consequence, the ecological imbalance and the increase in population has complicated the administrative and environmental mechanisms in Cox's bazar. Hence,

Bangladesh was planning for relocation of Rohingyas since the exodus occurred. According to the relocation plan, they will be transported to Noakhali's Bhashan Char. Bhashan Char being a low-lying land, is designed with protective and productive resources to procure Rohingyas there. In the early week of December, 1600 Rohingyas are relocated to Bhashan Char. International concerns have been on the rise since the beginning regarding the protection of the Rohingyas from natural disasters or the fulfillment of the demands of basic necessities in the Char. Government of Bangladesh has assured international communities that enough protective measures have been adopted. Apart from defending the relocation from this point of view, we better focus on the aspects of 'internal relocation alternative' and whether Bangladesh is a worthy candidate to seek refuge under this principle.

Fundamentally there are two sets of determining factors about the functioning of 'internal relocation alternative'. One is the 'relevance analysis' and the other is 'reasonableness analysis'. Relevance analysis seeks whether the area of relocation is practically, legally, and safely accessible, and if the relocation seekers face serious harm upon the relocation. Reasonableness analysis transpires whether the claimant would be living a comparatively normal life in the relocated place. Imperative answers of these questions will make the 'internal relocation alternative' effective following the directions and practice of UNHCR's

handbook. As the Government of Bangladesh has met the credentials of creating a safe and preserved dwelling place along with livelihood, education, medical facilities, and sufficient freedom of movement for the Rohingyas in the Bhashan Char, it somehow justifies the relocation process at any cost. In fact, if we transpire into the provisions of Refugee Convention, Bangladesh is indirectly treating them with the rights of a refugee despite not having a status as such



Amidst growing concerns of the United Nations and other international NGOs, this active step of Bangladesh is justified under the auspices of 'internal relocation alternative'. Though generally internal relocation alternative is a threat to non-refoulment principle in the country of origin, but the same principle can be considered as an ace of principle of non-refoulment to some extent if it happens within the territory of host country. In the case of Bangladesh, firstly the country has not pushed the Rohingyas back to Myanmar and secondly after giving them refuge, it proceeded for a planned relocation. Not being a signatory to

the Refugee Convention, Bangladesh is comprehensively opting for protecting the Rohingyas and the relocation alternative is not out of the ambit of its humanitarian responses.

As the case of Gambia v Myanmar is still pending with the International Court of Justice, the hopes of repatriation stay dim. In fact, repatriation requires voluntariness, which actually failed twice or thrice due to the trauma carried by Rohingyas and their unwillingness to return. At least the execution of relocation process, as has been seen, has been quite consensual that actually aligns with 'relevance test' and 'reasonableness test' of internal relocation alternative. Since Rohingyas chose to dwell in the char with better refugee facilities, in no way it is justifiable to condemn Bangladesh for such relocation. From the legal point of view Bangladesh did not violate even a single provision or principle of international law rather it opened a scope of newer dimension of 'internal relocation alternative' in the host country. Undoubtedly, the doctrine needs examination, re-examination, discussions, and criticisms, but it will reenergise the refugee protection mechanism by manifesting international refugee law. Lastly, the stance of Bangladesh will create a nexus between the principle of non-refoulment and internal relocation principle by extending the dynamics of relocation from the country of origin to the host country.

THE WRITER IS LECTURER, DEPARTMENT OF LAW, FENI UNIVERSITY

EDITORIAL



LATE S. M. ALI DHAKA TUESDAY DECEMBER 29, 2020, POUSH 14, 1427 BS

# A staggering number of river grabbers

Eviction drives must be more unbiased and vigorous

T is frustrating that despite the High Court according all rivers in the country the status of "legal persons" or "living identities" and in spite of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's clear instructions to save our rivers by evicting river grabbers, these rivers are being indiscriminately destroyed by the greed of influential individuals and organisations. According to a report in this paper, as many as 57,390 individuals and organisations have grabbed the country's 770 rivers. Such a staggering number of river grabbers indicates how widespread this plunder of our natural resources is and how difficult it is to remove them.

The National River Conservation Commission (NRCC), which presented a report to the parliamentary standing committee on shipping, has identified this number and said that out of them, 18,579 have been evicted in the last one year by deputy commissioners of various districts. So what happens to the almost 38,811 river grabbers remaining, who continue to fill up the river beds to build structures and end up destroying the natural flow of the rivers, eventually killing them? How long will it take to remove them?

The reason why such gross destruction of our precious water bodies has taken place is because at least 10 percent of the encroachers are locally or politically influential people. These individuals have built large structures on the rivers and riverbanks in almost every division, yet it is not possible to demolish them because the encroachers are so powerful. Some of these are government structures and therefore not easy to demolish either. District commissioners also need more funding and logistical support to carry out eviction drives, according to the NRCC report.

It does not take much deduction to conclude that the only way that our rivers can be saved from this indiscriminate onslaught is through a strict and continuous drive to evict all river grabbers, regardless of their connections. To begin with, the government should first remove all structures in its name and those built by people who are affiliated or claim to be affiliated to the ruling party. This is the only way to make sure that eviction drives are successful.

We hope that in the coming year, we will see the government's commitment to freeing the rivers from these encroachers and allowing these rivers to breathe again. Livelihoods, aquatic life, river transport, food security and relief from water logging-everything depends on our rivers being able to flow unfettered. Rivers are our lifelines and to save them means saving ourselves.

### Study predicts sevenfold surge in climate migration by 2050

Strategical steps crucial to tackle the loss of homes and jobs

study by ActionAid and its partners titled "Costs of climate inaction: displacement and distress I migration " across five South Asian countries— Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka — found that a total of 63 million people would be forced to migrate if the global community fails to limit global warming within a rise of two degrees since the pre-industrial period, a goal which was set by the Paris Agreement. And in Bangladesh, it could displace nearly three million people from their homes by 2050. Most of the migration will be caused due to events like sea level rise, lack of drinking water, drought-like situations and loss of biodiversity. Effects of extreme weather events like floods and cyclones were not included in this study. It is appalling that the number of displaced people due to climate change in South Asia is almost as many as global migrants due to war and conflicts. Geographically, we have always remained vulnerable to climate disasters. Eightythree percent of the people who live on floodplains are directly impacted by riverbank erosion, with the majority of people being displaced multiple times. As a result, many end up in the capital to find jobs. If nothing is done to divert these migrants, they will almost all end up in Dhaka city, which does not have the capacity to absorb such large scale migration. The national budget allocations of thousands of crores of Taka as climate relevant investment means nothing if it fails to protect vulnerable communities from climate related disasters. Unless we take major steps as a global community, people will continue to be displaced and become climate migrants around the world. While developed countries must cut emissions and support developing countries that are most vulnerable to adapt to climate change and recover from climate disasters, these countries themselves have to think of long-term strategies that will support climate migrants. Decentralisation could help to create jobs in district towns and villages so that the already overburdened cities like Dhaka and Chattogram are not further taxed by the continuous influx of climate induced migration. At the same time, the government must ensure building more climate resilient and migrant-friendly towns through investing in infrastructure. Needless to say, it is our responsibility to do whatever necessary to stabilise the greenhouse gas emissions in order to protect the earth from the constant threat of climate change.



gratefulness to our martyrs and the freedom fighters for their sacrifices. It is also fitting to recognise the contribution of India for its assistance, without whose help it might have taken longer than nine months to throw the Pakistan Army off our soil. Over the last 50 years, Bangladesh's

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primary preoccupation in the diplomatic sphere has been to chart a course for a harmonious coexistence with India, which for the greater part of our independent existence has been our "only neighbour" since Bangladesh had hardly bothered to look towards its east, at Myanmar, till the Rohingya problem became a very serious security issue for Bangladesh. If foreign relationships are predicated on three concentric rings, each defining the sphere of our interests, the first two of those have been dominated, and to some extent dictated, by India.

It has been 49 years since India recognised Bangladesh on December 6, 1971, the second country do so after Bhutan, ten days before the surrender of the Pakistanis to the joint Bangladesh-India command. And it is worth taking a look at how the bilateral relationship has panned out in these years. Perhaps a look at the recent virtual summit between the two prime ministers on December 17, and at the compact reached between the two countries, would be a good starting point to examine the real state of Bangladesh-India relations. And one should mention that official and public perceptions of Bangladesh-India relations are different.

The Bangladesh-India relationship has seen many peaks and troughs in the last five decades. The peaks and troughs were directly related to whether it was the Awami League or BNP that was in power. It must be mentioned that the course of the foreign policy of the nascent state, both in terms of regional and international relationships, was defined by Bangabandhu himself. He made no secret of his intention to acquire for Bangladesh as much diplomatic space for manoeuvre as necessary by a sovereign and self-respecting nation. He asserted firmly the multiple identities of Bangladesh, which couldn't have been

lost on those at home and abroad who wanted Bangladesh to be seen as only a singular construct of nationhood. He was cut out in the mould of an idealistprinciples rather than realism dominated his foreign policy outlook.

Those who have followed the course of the Bangladesh–India relationship closely must not have failed to notice in recent times the oft reiteration of the excellent state of the relationship between the two countries. Constant restating of the "extraordinary" relationship, which is supposed to be on a very even keel, may convey a different impression to the more keen observers.

Indeed, in spite of the official pronouncements, our relationship had come under a degree of strain in recent times. And that was induced by both the



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi at the 4th Bimstec Summit in August 2018. PHOTO: BSS

internal and external policies of India. The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), followed immediately by the National Register of Citizenship or NRC 2019, was a major source of concern for Bangladesh. Although our official position is that these are internal matters of India, it nonetheless created flutters in the official circles. The statement of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on the CAA that, "We do not understand why they [the Indian government] did it, it was not necessary," does indeed express the country's concerns about the likely deleterious consequences of the CAA on Bangladesh. The scurrilous and snide comments about Bangladeshis by very senior BJP leaders did not help either.

Strain was also induced by Bangladesh's position on the Belt

significant amounts of local revenue, the

capita for urban development compared

who are directly elected by the people are

expected to bear more responsibilities to

generate sufficient local resources through

imposing taxes, rates and fees to meet the

various needs of the urban population.

pressures on large cities, the continuous

In order to reduce population

government puts in less resources per

to the rural areas. In this scenario, the

municipal mayors and the councillors

document, such as Border Management and Security Cooperation (one is not sure whether the issue of terrorism really merits inclusion under this issue), and Trade Partnership for Growth (but restrictions remain on import of certain essential items from India-on December 22, Bangladesh demanded the withdrawal of a ban on seed imports from India to boost bilateral cooperation in the agricultural sector). Then there is the most strategically important issue for India, which has been more than adequately met by Bangladesh-Connectivity for Prosperity. In this regard, it appears that while there have been ample extensions of connectivity between the Indian mainland and its North-East through the Bangladesh-India connectivity programme, sub-regional

connectivity is yet to come to full fruition, and the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) initiative is still waiting to be operationalised. And one would hope that Bangladesh would get the appropriate dividends it deserves by allowing the use of its facilities for transit. Bangladesh happens to be India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and we believe that not only should Bangladesh expand its export basket, but India should also liberalise its import policy vis a vis Bangladesh to offset the huge balance of trade deficit.

As far as Cooperation in Water Resources, Power and Energy is concerned, while the two leaders underscored the need for an early conclusion of the Framework of Interim Agreement on sharing of waters of six joint rivers, namely, Manu, Muhuri, Khowai, Gumti, Dharla and Dudhkumar, sharing of the Teesta waters was predictably absent. This is what the Bangladesh foreign minister had to say to The Daily Star on the question of Teesta-"You know what the barriers to signing the Teesta water-sharing agreement are. The Indian government, multiple times, has promised that they would sign the agreement after solving their internal disputes over the issue. So, there is no reason to create an embarrassing situation by raising this question repeatedly. Rather, you should pose this question to the government and media of West Bengal." So the Teesta remains on the list of promises. And the centre in India has found a good excuse in Mamata Banerjee's intransigence to shelve the Teesta water issue for the time being.

There was a single paragraph in the joint statement on forcibly displaced persons from the Rakhine state of Myanmar, but India's expressed position on the issue is in contrast to their demonstrated position on it. What other impression shall we form when India consistently abstains from voting on the Rohingya issue at the UN?

Since the time Awami League returned to power in 2009, every one of India's security and strategic concerns has been answered by Bangladesh promptly and positively. India's Bangladesh locked North-East is no longer so. Mutual cooperation in dealing with extremism and terrorism has paid dividends. But two of Bangladesh's most pressing concerns remain to be adequately addressed-Teesta water sharing and border killings (which merits a separate article). Thus, the question we are compelled to ask is, will these issues be satisfactorily addressed, and soon?

Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan, ndc, psc (Retd), is a former Associate Editor of The Daily Star.

Developing small and medium-sized

towns is the answer

# The Hasina-Modi December summit

and Road Initiative and the strategic

on South Asia, and indeed on a large

disinclination to join the US led Indo-

Pacific bandwagon to counter China's

influence demonstrated its resolve to

not get involved in an arrangement that

may well take the character of a security

But nothing of these was reflected,

understandably, in the 39-point joint

Modi virtual summit, which contained

relationship thriving in multitude areas of

cooperation. There were many substantive

countries that have been mentioned in the

statement released after the Hasina-

platitudes and reiterations of intent

and the excellent state of the mutual

issues of permanent interest to both

swathe of the globe. Bangladesh's

organisation eventually.

implication of China's enlarged footprint

LETTERS **TO THE EDITOR** 

letters@thedailystar.net

#### Tackling the porn pandemic

The anti-porn campaign launched by the government blocked around 22,000 porn sites, but that had little to no effect as people are using VPNs for access. Soft porn is spreading on social media, and porn related terms are some of the most searched phrases on Google in Bangladesh. In a country where sex education is still taboo, it is hard to comprehend the impact of porn addiction on physical and mental health. Amidst the pandemic, when the whole world is shifting online, we need to prioritise handling this stigmatised issue

Iftekhar Ahmed Sakib, Dhaka



visited more than a dozen small and medium sized towns in Bangladesh during the last two months to get a good understanding about our urbanisation trends

Incomparable with Dhaka and Chattogram cities, these towns have total populations varying between an estimated 30,000 and 500,000. The medium-sized urban centres, which include the district towns and some upazila centres, have reasonably good infrastructure and services, although the situation is not equally good in all the small urban centres. In the municipal and city corporations, which are urban local governments, through financing by both the government and bilateral and multilateral funding agencies like World Bank and Asian Development Bank, the conditions of roads, drains, footpaths and street lights, and the quality of piped water supplies, have improved significantly in the past two decades. The private sector also invested in state-of-theart commercial centres, hotels, hospitals, residential apartments, recreational parks, schools etc in these towns.

The decentralisation initiative takes different forms in rural and urban contexts. Urban areas are geographically much smaller in size but need huge amounts of investment for meeting different demands of the people. The rural areas are sparsely populated, and demand for both individual and public services are usually limited. Therefore, the nature of public representation in urban areas vary from the rural areas.

In urban areas, the inhabitants themselves can afford to bear a large part of the costs of civic services because of their high per capita income and tax payment capacities. The contribution of the urban sector is about 70 percent of the country's GDP. Municipal taxes are therefore imposed on urban households to generate local resources, which are used for building infrastructure and providing civic services. On the premise that urban areas are capable of generating sized towns should continue. Since the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 until 2011 when the last population census took place, the country's population has nearly doubled but the urban population increased more than seven times. The total urban population in the country was five million in 1971, which reached 38 million in 2011. There were only 108 cities and towns in the country in 1971, which increased to 532 in 2011. The number of municipalities increased from 50 in 1974 to 339 in 2020. Of these, 328 are pourashava and 11

are city corporations. About 95 percent of these municipalities are small to medium

#### size towns

Regrettably, the cities and towns have been growing in an unplanned manner. The urban population will increase to about 50 percent by 2030 and surely, half the population of the country should not be living in unplanned urban areas. Compared to the large cities, the prices of land and apartments are still lower in the small and medium size towns and the quality of life is better, with less pollution and traffic congestion. These towns can still be planned and well developed but

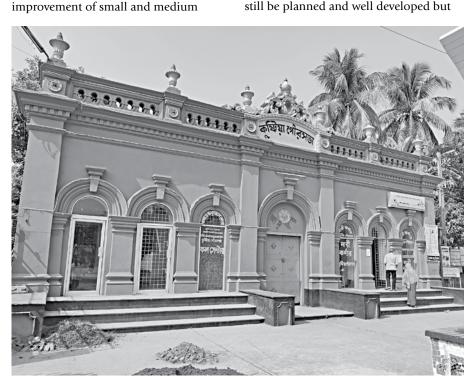


PHOTO: COURTESY

this must be done on an urgent basis.

The small and medium sized towns should be developed in a planned manner for sustainable urbanisation in Bangladesh. All the municipalities should initiate preparations of master plans without delay. The challenge for municipalities to recover road-side land and demolish unauthorised structures is huge, which is the consequence of years of haphazard growth of the towns. Some mayors, through discussions with the local people, have made visible progress in this respect and turned these challenges into opportunities. These mayors, with unusual courage, negotiating power,

dedication and foresightedness, have improved the urban environment and made a difference in the lives of the people by focusing on areas of common and shared interests. If they have master plans, they will be able to turn their areas into truly liveable towns.

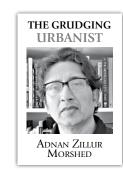
All the small and medium sized towns need master plans that should guide their future expansion. With the support of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and Urban Development Directorate (UDD), a handful of municipalities have already prepared master plans. The plans are prepared by the municipal bodies according to the Local Government (Pourashava) Act 2009. A few of the local bodies have also recruited town planners in order to help implement the master plans. However, not only a few but all the municipalities need to develop master plans and recruit town planners. The municipalities should put in their best efforts to properly implement the master plans once they are drawn up, to contain haphazard growth.

The next thing needed is to make the master plans legally binding upon the municipalities. Without being a legal document, the local bodies won't be able to implement it properly. To become a really functional document, the master plan should be developed after careful social, environmental, demographic, financial and technical assessments. The plans should ideally be endorsed by the Ministry of Law and gazette notifications should be issued for each one of them.

After the master plan is recognised as a legal document, this should be the basis for planned development of the towns. The master plan can play a key role in sustainable urbanisation, with the balanced growth of the towns. Along with the master plan, the urban local bodies also need new building construction rules, since most of them are still using the outdated Building Construction Rules, 1996. If these local bodies can create necessary facilities in small and medium sized towns in a planned manner, many people will decide to settle in these towns instead of choosing overcrowded Dhaka, Chattogram and other large cities.

Dr Nawshad Ahmed is an economist and urban planner, and currently working in an international organisation

# How the demolition of a train station changed America



T the heart **I** of the ongoing debate on the potential demolition of TSC and Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka is an old philosophical dilemma—how

to progress while retaining some loyalty to history, a key concern of many 20th century philosophers, such as Paul Ricoeur. The relationship between progress and history could easily be reduced to one of hostility. If progress or modernisation is seen as a onedirectional march towards an improved state of life, things that presumably represent history may be considered impediments to it and, therefore, their removal is justified in the name of progress. What is denied in this falsely simplified equation is the possibility of a symbiotic relationship between progress and history.

This debate has a long record in 20th century urban development. The debate merits a revisit in the context of the current plans to take down such iconic structures as TSC and Kamalapur Railway Station. The experience of the West in the last century could be instructive for urban administrators in developing countries.

Let us consider the contentious case of another railway station: New York's Pennsylvania Station. Designed by the acclaimed architectural firm McKim, Mead and White in 1910, this neoclassical building served, both literally and symbolically, as a gateway to New York City (similar to the role Kamalapur played 50 years later). The largest station in the world at the time of its inauguration, with a concourse longer than the nave of St Peter's in Rome and a light-filled waiting room 148-feet high, Penn Station was meant to be a soaring civic monument to America's technological prowess and rising global stature in the early 20th century.

By the mid-1950s, however, its future became uncertain as train travel declined due to the rise of car and air travel Yearly financial loss became a headache. While the edifice continued to serve as an urban attraction for architects, photographers, filmmakers and tourists, many observers found its train level, entrances and exits confusing.

Despite protests from leading

# Lessons for Kamalapur and TSC

architects, artists, critics and the public, the demolition of Penn Station began in 1963. No legal tools to prevent the destruction of historic buildings existed at the time in the US. Furthermore, a demolition frenzy marked the post-World War II period in America as rebuilding became a key driver of modernisation. It was an era of what was known as Urban Renewalan urban "cleansing" policy of demolishing wide swaths of city blocks, dense neighbourhoods, congested housing complexes, "obsolete" historic structures and business districts to compensate for a rapid population and business decline in the city centre, on the one hand, and accommodate new developments and automobile-centric planning, on the other. That was the euphoric era of progress.

Penn Station would have been just another building that was razed and tossed into history's dustbin. But this time, it was different. The loss of the iconic transportation hub, used by millions of commuters and tourists, was a watershed in raising public consciousness on historic preservation in the US. In 1965, President Lyndon B Johnson appointed a special committee to examine the state of heritage protection. A year later (the demolition of Penn Station was complete by then), the US Congress passed the first national policy governing preservation: The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Earlier preservation measures-the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the Historic Sites Act of 1935-had failed to do what the NHPA could begin to accomplish from the 1960s onward.

The law not only helped formalise and professionalise historic preservation as a process but also spawned other useful preservation measures, including the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register created a legal basis for protecting individual buildings, districts and archeological sites across the US that were considered witness to national and regional narratives.

In developing countries today, there is an important lesson to be learned from the American experience of the NHPA. The law empowered American cities and communities to tell their unique stories through the preservation of buildings and sites that they cherish as part of their history. It is a truism that there is no excitement to visit a city filled with familiar buildings,

familiar restaurant chains and a familiar business district. There is a reason that people love to go to Rome, Venice, Paris, London, Prague and Kolkata, among many other cities with a strong historic-preservation culture. In the era of globalisation, when global corporations perpetuate urban sameness in the name of smart cities, historic preservation as a unique way of storytelling could be both a cultural draw and an economic boost. Research

#### The iconic Kamalapur Railway Station's existing plaza is facing demolition due to a new plan regarding the capital's first metro rail.

shows that a city with a unique urban personality is in fact good economics. Heritage tourism bolsters local economies, helps build social capital and creates jobs. Both local and foreign investors are attracted to a unique city because there are spaces for new opportunities and people hungry for experimentation. From Hanoi to Marrakesh, Seoul to Shanghai, I have seen in recent times how cities are making efforts to preserve their historic buildings and neighbourhoods.

Development, insensitive to what it replaces, could be a permanent wound. Old Penn Station's modern replacement, including Madison Square Garden (the venue of the 1971 Concert for Bangladesh) and the adjoining commercial building, has drawn much derision for its lack of imagination. Recalling the civic value of the original station, architectural historian Vincent

Scully sarcastically wrote: "One entered the city like a god; one scuttles in now like a rat." Developments can both modernise and traumatise at the same time. Historical memory is a powerful driver of feeling citizenship.

Preservation does not have to freeze a heritage building into a glorified museum and snuff out the vitality of its everyday life. Today, "adaptive reuse" of historic buildings has become a dynamic and economically vibrant

PHOTO

alternative to the demolition-and-

Adaptive-reuse projects generally

preserve the exterior of a building,

retrofit it with modern amenities,

and repurpose its interior for a new

compatible use. An abandoned factory

could become a museum or a housing

is protected, while it is infused with a

reuse projects are gaining traction

win-win situation.

Africa (2017).

around the world since they offer a

Two of my favourite examples of

adaptive-reuse projects are London's

Tate Modern (2000) and Cape Town's

Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art

Bankside Power Station, a mid-

20th century oil-fired power station

on the banks of the Thames that

ceased operations in 1981, was set

complex. This way the historic building

new economic and social life. Adaptive-

replacement model of development.

ADNAN ZILLUR MORSHED

2000, while generating on average GBP 100 million in economic benefits to London annually. London-based architectural firm Heatherwick Studio converted a nearly 100-year-old grain silo in Cape Town's Victoria and Alfred Waterfront into what has become one of Africa's best-known museums: the Zietz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa. It is the world's largest repository of contemporary art from Africa. Abandoned since the 1990s and the

tallest building in Sub-Saharan Africa, the grain silo's 116 giant concrete tubes were sliced inside to create a huge central atrium and 80 interconnected galleries across nine floors, with a rooftop sculptor garden, restaurant and The Silo Hotel. All of this was made possible without sacrificing the original industrial experience of a grain silo. A derelict building does not always have to be demolished. It can be given a new life. All one needs is a bit of cultural aspiration and a creative desire to take

to be demolished. But community

campaign saved the iconic industrial

building from the wrecking ball. In

the mid-1990s, Swedish architects

Herzog and de Meuron transformed

the abandoned building into one of

the most visited modern art museums

in the world and one of the UK's top

three tourist attractions. The mammoth turbine hall of the power station

became a magnificent, repurposed art

gallery. More than 40 million people

have visited the power-station-turned-

museum since its inauguration in

on a challenge.

Development is essential. A city cannot be static. It needs to accommodate population growth and meet economic goals. Infrastructure must be built to modernise a city. But all of this is possible without sacrificing the buildings and sites that serve as symbols of a people's historical memory. I have written before on why TSC and Kamalapur should be preserved in sync with new development plans. These beloved buildings could be adapted to the demands of our time. They do not have to be demolished. They are Dhaka's quintessential stories. We need those stories, maybe with a few new characters and a bit of plot twists.

Adnan Zillur Morshed is a professor of architecture at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. He also serves as Executive Director of the Centre for Inclusive Architecture and Urbanism at BRAC University. He is the author of DAC, Dhaka in 25 Buildings (Altrim Publishers, 2017). Email: morshed@cua.edu

# The 2020 Development Pathshala: Through the lens of BEACON



prima facie directional narrative for our collective progression

towards a more equitable economyboth at home and abroad. A common theme across the 17 UNSDGs remains in enhancing capacity building measures and mobilising skills transfers to communities. During the ongoing pandemic, we have witnessed, with immense optimism, the activation of coordinated youth efforts and the development of crisis response groups in Bangladesh—beyond humanitarian aid measures, there is an intense focus on youth-based policy innovation and community empowerment.

The term "Development Pathshala (School)" was first introduced to me by one such group. BEACON (Bangladesh Emergency Action Against Covid-19) is akin to several youth-based initiatives which have activated youth potential during the past nine months. Reaching over 100 geographic locations through leveraging its 4P (passion, purpose, performance and pace) philosophy, it has mobilised and implemented projects in food rationing, medical safety gear and provision of oxygen cylinders. It has also supported distant learning initiatives for children via publication of innovative supplementary workbooks and connecting online learning initiatives to resources, and provided cash handouts to non-MPO teachers and members of lower-income groups. Additionally, BEACON's initiatives have supported mental health ventures, mobilised treatment funding for those in need, made provisions for daily meals to street children, and provided medical camp support, winter blankets and warm clothes. It also responded to natural disasters during this pandemic

**HE UN** through specially designed projects aimed at those affected by Cyclone Amphan and the extreme floods this year.

> All in all, BEACON has executed over 70 multifaceted projects over the course of the pandemic—from financing and facilitating the launch of Powered Air Purifying Respirators (PAPR) to subsidising over 50,000 people through a project called Food Ration for Covid Impacted Populations. The initiative has designed innovative crisis management elite force that is prepared to go to



#### One of the schoolrooms that are supported by the BEACON initiative.

schemes that reflect the needs of its targeted populations. But in addition to providing relief, it has taken its crisis response a step further-via training and education. And it is here where the idea of a Development Pathshala comes into play and this is how BEACON stands out in its approach to youth empowerment during this pandemic.

The lead organiser and co-founder of BEACON, Ashfaque Kabir, suggested that rather than simply getting the youth to partake in food distribution or fundraising campaigns, there is a dire need to guide them in a structured manner at different levels of project management and execution.

Kabir, a private sector professional by trade with experience in the development sector, highlighted the importance of training volunteers in writing project proposals, planning a budget, preparing survey lists, building a team, organising logistics and knowing how to get the best resources from vendors in their areas. BEACON's primary mission has been to mobilise youth-led community action groups, especially in remote areas, and transform them into an

Rajshahi, Banishanta in Khulna or Dingaputha Haur in Netrokona—in places where very little or no help had reached.

Spurred on by a successful crowdfunding campaign that reached beyond the borders of Bangladesh, BEACON judiciously managed its resources by streamlining projects based on targeted communities. Social schemes such as BEACON, BacharLorai and similar youth-based efforts, all have one parallel trendthey use grassroots and to a large extent, non-corporate fundraising strategies, to design projects and target segments of a particular population. For example, in BEACON's work, more than 40 targeted communities, which include dairy farmers, municipality cleaners, sex workers, transgenders, transportation and jute mill workers, cobblers etc., were identified, after several rounds of assessments, as being groups which needed immediate help but were unlikely to receive such. It is here where research and field surveys come into play-all in all, a key focus on skills transfer and the subsequent development of capacity measures to make credible change, is a key takeaway

Bangladesh has been blessed to have two major organisations that have educated the country and the world when it comes to social development—both the BRAC and Grameen Bank models focus on bottom-up-development. It is my sincere belief that younger Bangladeshis who have stood up to make an impact and assist the country during the pandemic are the true carriers of the vision portrayed by the UNSDGs—fundamentally, there is a general consensus in empowering marginalised communities through the power of education and training. While the impact of BEACON and similar groups for example, is by definition minute when compared to what private corporations are injecting into the economy, it is important to note that there has been an engaged form of youth mobilisation and crossfunctional collaboration between

smaller groups. And this is heartening for the future of the country.

This pandemic has been our Development Pathshala and the education we derive through collaboration is crucial in narrating a people-based developmental trajectory for the country—if the UNSDGs are to be realised in its most holistic form, community-mitigation techniques must be prioritised. And I hope that the government takes notice and inspiration from the actions of such actors.

BEACON derives its vision and mission of #TheSpiritof71 by taking inspiration from the first Prime Minister of this country, Tajuddin Ahmed, a selfless and honourable statesman who stood up in our nation's darkest hours. It has supported frontline healthcare workers with medical safety gear in more than 50 hospitals in remote locations like Haluaghat and Hatiya, subsidised seven medical camps with resources that reached more than 5,000 patients and distributed over 1,500 blankets so far to vulnerable populations in cold wave-hit regions in the North. Unlike corporations, such emergency response initiatives work on an adaptable build and operate basis and it is perhaps in this context that their achievements are greater than the numbers themselves.

BEACON, along with similar initiatives, were recognised in a recent book commissioned by the UNDP to acknowledge the crisis management efforts of youth groups and every day citizens in 2020-a recognition which they not only deserve, but one for which the entire country should be proud. The future of Bangladesh remains promising. I hope that in being part of the collective Development Pathshala during the ongoing pandemic, we as a country recognise where the future of Bangladesh lies-in the hands of its youth.

Mir Aftabuddin Ahmed is a Toronto-based Banking Professional and a recent Graduate of the University of Toronto in Economics and International Relations. He can be reached at aftab.ahmed@alum.utoronto.ca

#### PHOTO: COURTESY

and most importantly, develop the competence to respond effectively to future emergencies. In essence, it is building capacity for change within segments of its target populations, while empowering youth actors to take ownership of projects-doing so by transferring key project management skills incrementally to those who are participating in their initiatives. The result is that during the peak of the pandemic, when most parts of the country was paralysed under lockdown, these youth-led initiatives reached the most remote locations possible-such as Char Khidirpur in

any lengths to stand by the country,

Cabinet okays stern

Division in December 2018. Later, the

division finalised the draft and sent it

new law said different new elements

related to highways have been added,

broadening its scope. Many "issues"

do not come under the purview of the

The current law has only five sections

title, extent and commencement,

definition, temporary closing of

government roads, power to make rules,

and penalties. The new law will have 20.

As per the Highway Act-1925, all

'government roads" are under the

Public Works Department (PWD).

But the situation is different in reality.

For decades, they have been under the

usage of highways has increased

since 1925, and on the other, many

developments like expressways and

controlled-access highways, toll roads

There are some 22,361km of

highways -- 3,943km of national

highways, 4,882km of regional

highways and 13,536km of district

highways -- under the department,

according to RHD's 2019-20 annual

Despite a ban, non-motorised

vehicles continue to ply the country's

22 highways. Besides, simultaneous

operation of fast and slow vehicles on

Also, as of July this year, there were

at least 16,505 illegal structures on

or along roads and highways across

the country. The RHD data shows

1,48,182.68 acres of the department's

intersections, are largely blamed

for highway accidents which claim

A chapter of the draft law talks

The department would ensure

engineering safety while constructing

or repairing highways, give highest

thousands of lives every year.

land were under illegal occupation.

the roads is commonplace.

These slow

the structures,

about road safety.

have surfaced in the road sector.

On one hand, the number and

Officials involved in drafting the

to the law ministry for vetting.

current law, they said.

jurisdiction of the RHD.

report.

# Fort city open to destruction

FROM PAGE 12

boundary walls, five acres which belong to the district administration, and 3.70 acres which belong to the Shah Sultan Balkhi Mazar.

The majority of the land -- 319 acres -- belongs to local villagers since Partition in 1947.

Mahasthangarh was declared a protected monument under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act-1904 by the then Bengal government in 1920.

Naheed Sultana, regional director of the DoA, Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions, said Mahasthangarh houses important metal, stone and earth artefacts from the pre-Maurya, Maurya, Shunga, Gupta, Pala, Sen, Mughal, and even the British, periods.

"The place contains valuable archaeological evidence from the 4th century BC to the 19th century AD -such a chronological history of human civilisation is found nowhere else in Bangladesh," she said, adding that Mahasthangarh has been on the list of probable Unesco world heritage sites since 1999.

"Therefore, acquiring the land for preserving this archaeological evidence immediately is crucial, not only for Bangladesh but also for the rest of the world.'

She said generation after generation of villagers have been using valuable ancient bricks from the site to build houses and digging deep tubewells and drains, damaging the archaeological site. "Once these artefacts are lost, we will never get it back.

In 2012, the High Court ruled that the government immediately acquire all private land within the fort city and also directed that during this acquiring period, no new construction take place.

The Antiquities Act, 1968 (amended in 1976) states new buildings, walls, demarcation marks, drains cannot be constructed and no harm be done to archaeological sites.

Over the years, at least 987 houses and other structures have been built in the fort city in violation of the antiquities act, according to the DoA.

Razia Sultana, custodian of the Mahasthangarh Archaeological Museum, told The Daily Star they filed 13 complaints with the Shibganj Police Station this year, against 26 people constructing illegal structures in the fort city, in violation of both the High Court order and the antiquities act.

Contacted recently, DoA Director General Md Hannan Mia told the Daily Star, "We sent a proposal to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs on December 29 last year on acquiring the land immediately. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, it is taking more time."

The 393.31 acres of land will require an estimated Tk 739.5 crore to acquire, the DG said.

#### VILLAGERS' CONCERNS

Morium Begum, 35, of Garh Mahasthan village, which is inside the fort city, said, "The government is neither buying our land nor allowing us to build new houses. As our family gets larger, we need new homes and infrastructure."

Another resident Dulu Sheikh said for the last seven to eight years, the villagers have not been allowed to build any new houses, tubewells, drains, set up irrigation machines, or dig a graveyard in the area.

"If we take any step to do new construction, the local archaeological department file case after case at the police station and police are stopping us from building new houses and harassing us," he said.

However, DoA officials refuted the allegation that they impede agricultural work and digging of graveyards in the area.

On visits to the site this year -in February and November -- this correspondent found many new brick houses being constructed, violating the High Court order.

Multiple villagers -- requesting to remain anonymous -- also claimed police officials in exchange of bribes allowing people to build new houses. Contacted, SM Baziuzzaman, officer-

in-charge of Shibganj Police Station, refuted the allegation.

Mosharaf Hossain, another villager, said, "The High Court ordered the archaeology department to acquire the fort city land immediately, but seven to eight years have passed without the archaeology department or the government taking any initiative to acquire the land.

"We villagers are facing many problems to construct even a small drain for irrigation."

Manzil Murshid, president of Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), which filed the writ petition for the preservation of the site leading to the HC order, told the Daily Star that the villagers went to the court this February for a status quo, so that they can build new infrastructures in the area.

"But the High Court denied them and ordered the department concerned, district administration and police to protect the site from illegal structures." On December 29, 2019 the DoA sent an application to the secretary of the cultural affairs ministry urging all the necessary steps to acquire all 393.31 acres of land in the fort city.

The application, which The Daily Star has obtained a copy of, states that Mahasthangarh and its adjacent archeological sites are under consideration as a Unesco world heritage site and the land is not acquired soon, the government will lose control of the ancient fort city and important archeological evidence is already being occupied by local villagers.

The application also warned that tension between the villagers and the local DoA is growing and violence might break out if the land is not acquired in time.

# His brother, nephew testify

#### FROM PAGE 12

at Shahjalal Islami Bank Ltd's Uttara Branch in their names in which Tk 2.25 crore was transferred without their knowledge.

Narendra said he was an employee of the Shipping Ministry and he was retired from service in January of

Narendra Sinha said his brother SK Sinha one day told him that he [SK Sinha] needed to open a bank account for a special purpose, but it was impossible for him as he was a government service-holder.

went to the bank and did not sign any cheques, adding that he had no business transactions.

Moreover, he had no knowledge of depositing money to their joint FDRs of Tk 50 and 10 lakh at Dhaka

the Supreme Court branch of Sonali Bank; SK Sinha was "solely aware" of it, Narendra continued.

relationship with Shankhajit.

the court he went to Uttara branch of Shahjalal Islami Bank following a request from his uncle SK Sinha and signed some papers given by the manager.

He also said he didn't know anything about transactions of the

Sinha's direction, he opened two

Bank Ltd's Uttara Branch and later he deposited Tk 14 lakh to Dhaka Bank's EPZ branch

Earlier on August 18, complainant He also said he never went to of the case Anti-Corruption Commission Director Syed Iqbal Hossain gave his statement before the

Sixteen out of 18 prosecution witnesses, including the complainant, gave their statements.

in the court vesterday while Sinha and three others are on the run.

On December 10 last year, the ACC pressed charges against the 11 accused. On August 13, the same court framed charges against them.

Justice Sinha resigned on November 11, 2017, from abroad. He is now in the USA

### Top priority given

FROM PAGE 12 government has attached the highest Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul priority to the agriculture sector. Referring to the food shortage in the country, Bangabandhu says the aim by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of government efforts is to attain virtually. self-sufficiency in food within the WHY THE NEW LAW? shortest possible time. In this regard The Roads and Highways Department he mentions the import of 35,000 (RHD) prepared the draft and sent it power pumps are intended to boost to the Road Transport and Highways

the winter crops in the country. Bangabandhu calls for a halt to the menacing population explosion in the country and emphasises the need for family planning. He says that proper education and training of women are essential for popularising family planning in the country. He also points out that the constitution provides equal opportunities to women in the country. GOKHALE CALLS ON PM The visiting Indian Law Minister HR Gokhale calls on Bangabandhu at the Gono Bhaban today and stays with him for some time. They discuss various bilateral issues of the two countries. TAJUDDIN CONDEMNS US

BOMBING Tajuddin Ahmed, minister for finance and planning, today demands an immediate halt to the renewed US bombing offensive against North Vietnam and withdrawal of the US armed forces from South Vietnam to pave the way to a lasting peace in that part of the world.

Source: December 30, 1972 issues of Dainik Bangla, The Bangladesh Observer and Ittefaq.

#### Ancient snack FROM PAGE 12

food which the shop keeper lowered into a counter with circular holes. The front of the counter was

decorated with brightly coloured frescoes, some depicting animals that were part of the ingredients in the food sold, such as a chicken and two ducks hanging upside down.

'This is an extraordinary find. It's the first time we are excavating an entire termopolium," said Massimo Ossana, director of the Pompeii archaeological park.

Archaeologists also found a decorated bronze drinking bowl known as a patera, ceramic jars used for cooking stews and soups, wine flasks and amphora.

Pompeii, 23 km (14 miles) southeast of Naples, was home to about 13,000 people when it was buried under ash, pumice pebbles and dust as it endured the force of an eruption equivalent to many atomic bombs.

"Our preliminary analyses shows that the figures drawn on the front of the counter, represent, at least in part, the food and drink that were sold there," said Valeria Amoretti, a site anthropologist.

punished eight virus whistleblowers

"extraordinary" success in controlling an economy on the rebound while through painful lockdowns and surging caseloads a year on from the

attention of authorities, who have the virus inside its borders, with so far as they defang criticism of much of the rest of the world stutters

the government's response to the outbreak. Beijing has congratulated itself for start of the pandemic in Wuhan.

priority to safety issues while constructing or maintaining roads, Islam told reporters after the cabinet identify and correct hazardous turns meeting, which was presided over and evict risky establishments, as per the draft law.

#### WHAT OTHER SECTIONS SAY

According to the draft law, the government can declare any road a highway, controlled-access highway or expressway by issuing a gazette.

Besides, no road or highway can be connected to the controlled-access highway without prior approval from the RHD. If necessary, intersections, interchanges and merge lanes can be constructed upon approval of their design by the RHD. the draft said.

Government and non-government utility service providers have to take prior approval and pay charges to instal lines beside the highways.

And, the government and nonovernment authorities have to shift their establishments at their own cost if necessary, to make way for development or maintenance of highways, it said.

Setting up any infrastructure without approval from the RHD would be considered "invasion", and such an offence would be punishable under section 82 of the Road Transport Act-2018, the draft says.

Section 82 of the RTA stipulates a maximum two-year jail term and Tk 5 lakh fine, or both.

The department would have the authority not to allow a utility service that may hinder normal transport services.

Any motor vehicle that spills elements harmful to the highway would not be allowed on the roads. One has to pay a highest Tk 25,000 fine for violating this provision.

One may face a maximum fine of Tk 5,000 for using highways to dry crops, straw and similar materials for walking through nonor dedicated places. Hanging billboards, signboards or erecting arches without approval may result in a maximum fine of Tk 50,000.

All the offences will be punishable by mobile court.

Preliminary draft of the act had proposed bringing the Highway Police under the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges but it was left out in the final draft.

Meanwhile, the cabinet also approved the RHD's Highways Landscaping Policy to protect national and regional highways from damage.

# Citizen journo jailed

vehicles

especially

and

near

FROM PAGE 12

🖌 প্রেরণার কথা

#### 14-day quarantine must for all UK With them, the number of deaths UK by a Biman flight, were allowed

Airport by the same flight, Nasrin to go home following their health reached 7,479 and the death rate was

account from SK Sinha's account at

that bank and did not sign any cheque. Besides, he had no business

In his deposition, Shankhajit told

Narendra Sinha also said he never account and his uncle SK Sinha and his wife made transactions in that account.

Shankhajit also said as per SK

same court.

Seven of the accused were present

Akter, a doctor at the health desk at HSIA, told The Daily Star.

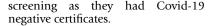
After their health screening, all the passengers were allowed to go home as they had Covid-19 negative certificates.

"But they will have to be in home quarantine for 14 days," added Dr Nasrin.

Several health experts opined for suspension of air communications with the UK, following the discovery of the new strain of Covid-19 in that country.

At least 40 countries have so far suspended air communications with the UK, according to media reports.

On December 24, some 165



In the same flight, another 29 passengers landed at the Dhaka airport. Two of them were sent to institutional guarantine at Diabari in the capital's Uttara.

Meanwhile, Obaidul Quader, Awami League general secretary and also road transport and bridges minister, yesterday said at a regular briefing at his residence that the first shipment of the Covid-19 vaccines would reach the country by the end of January or early February next year.

#### **NEW DEATHS**

Twenty-seven more people died from people, including five infants, who Covid-19 in 24 hours ending 8:00am were above 60 years old, added the reached the Sylhet airport from the yesterday, said a DGHS press release.

1.47 percent.

At least 932 new infections were recorded in the meantime, taking the number of people infected to 5,10,080, said the release.

Against 12,617 tests in those 24 hours, the positivity rate was 7.39 percent, while the overall positivity rate was 16.02 percent.

In the same 24 hours, 1,357 Covid-19 patients recovered, raising the number of recoveries to 4,53,318. The recovery rate stood at 88.87 percent.

Among the 27 deceased, 23 were male. One was aged between 41 and 50, two were aged between 31 and 40, six between 51 and 60, and 18 release.



Due to conversion of banking operation to fully Islamic Shari'ah based operation, Standard Bank Limited will migrate its Core Banking Solution (CBS) and other software modules. As a result, some banking services and operations will be suspended as per following timetable:

Scheduled Downtime	Suspended Services			
From 30 December 2020, Wednesday, 06:00 PM (end of business hours) to 02 January 2021, Saturday, 10:00 PM	<ul> <li>ATM Services</li> <li>Debit Card Transactions</li> <li>Internet Banking Transactions</li> <li>DigiBanking Transactions</li> </ul>			
From 30 December 2020, Wednesday, 06:00 PM (end of business hours) to 04 January 2021, Monday, 10:00 PM	Interbank fund transfer through Cheque and other Electronic medium • BACH (Clearing) Operations • BEFTN and Digital Banking (EFT) Operations • RTGS Operations			

Except the mentioned services Cash transactions at branches and other regular activities of the bank will remain open.

You are requested to make transactions that require the mentioned services ahead of the time stated above. We sincerely appologize for the temporary inconvenience.



deploy troops in Darfur after tribal clashes

Sudan is to send troop reinforcements to the south of its Darfur region after 15 people were killed in tribal clashes, the official news agency SUNA said.

The governor of South Darfur state, Musa "the Mahdi, announced deployment of a large number of military forces in order to arrest those involved in the clashes and to collect the arms", it reported Sunday.

"The era of reconciliation conferences is over and the era of implementing the law has started," Mahdi said, referring to talks in recent months, as quoted by SUNA.

A local official, also cited by the agency, said a dispute between the Massalit and Fallata tribes in the Gereida area had led to armed clashes in which two members of the Fallata were killed.

Fallata mounted The reprisal attacks that left 13 dead and 34 wounded among the Massalit, SUNA said, without specifying when the violence broke out.



#### Growing Up

Our family had a lot of law and judiciary practitioners. My father passed away when I was five. I was practically brought up by my brothers. There was a very liberal attitude in our home. There was a plain living high thinking environment in our household. My eldest brother was not particularly fond of capitalists. He believed that businessmen have no idealism. My other elder brother, though not very progressive, also had a plain living high thinking attitude. This plain living high thinking of my family somehow triggered my rebellious spirits and I started thinking that this approach is not for me. So, in principle, I sort of rebelled.

#### **Role Model**

In boarding school, I met people from various backgrounds. I had a friend there, who belonged to a very rich business family from Ranchi, Bihar, India. I went to Tatanagar with him, where his father worked. There, I saw the industries made by Tata and I immediately knew that Jamsetji Tata would be my role model. When I told my brothers that I wanted to be an entrepreneur, they taunted me, "What do you know about business? Nobody in our family has ever gone into business. Give that thought a rest and study law, or sit for the government exam." Then, call it a twist of fate or not, I got a job offer from Pakistan Tobacco. The starting salary and facilities they provided were so lucrative that it impressed my eldest brother, my guardian.

#### **Opportunities after Independence**

When we gained our independence, there was a huge vacuum. I was looking for an opportunity after independence to leave Pakistan Tobacco and start a business. And I saw that entrepreneurship was not increasing for some reason.

While this was going on, one day, at a dinner party, I met a Frenchman. We started chatting. I asked him what he did for a living and he told me he was involved in import-export. I asked him, "What kind of business?". He said leather. He added, "I want to make you an offer, will you join me?". I said I will not take up another job as I am already well employed. To this, he said, "No, I am not offering you a job, I am offering you an agency. You will get a certain percentage from what you sell. You will also get a certain percentage from the goods you buy here. Do you want to do it?" So I came home and told my wife. She was furious. She told me it would be unwise to bid farewell to all the facilities provided by Pakistan Tobacco. My eldest brother told me that he would not speak to me ever again if I did this. Obviously, it became a very hard choice. But the person who really helped me at that time was my father-in-law. He told me that he supported me.

#### Starting with a Challenge

After this journey of mine started, I went up and down for the next 6-7 months. Then, Chittagong port, which was being salvaged by the Russians, opened up. This opening up improved things a bit. We started using the port and we did very well. I was able to accumulate some capital. Then the great tragedy struck us in 1975 and the government changed. The new government started privatizing sectors which used to be public. The first sector the then government privatized was the tanneries corporation. The first tannery that they put up for auction was Orient Tannery. I went to the auction and I bought it for BDT 12,22,000, which was a lot of money in 1975. So, this marked my entry into the leather business. And the rest is history.

My message for our future entrepreneurs is that working capital is the biggest problem. Now-a-days, there are venture capital firms who invest in green field projects. Bangladesh Bank has also started a fund for entrepreneurs. There, if you apply for up to a limit of BDT 5 million, you will get working capital. There is also a website for this fund. I would like to request my young entrepreneurs to visit their website. However, the situation has undoubtedly improved a lot.

#### Dreams for the Country

There was not much political stability after the tragedy in 1975. There has been political stability since 1990, but we had a break in between with two years of army rule. Now, democracy and development go together. If there is rule of law and democracy, I will invest. I need more investment. And for us, investment translates into job creation. The biggest challenge for South Asia, not only for Bangladesh, is job creation.

#### Who is the friend of an entrepreneur?

According to me, the best friend of an entrepreneur is the banker. Those who are entrepreneurs, please remember that your best friend in business is the banker. You choose the banker, but your relationship with the banker must be very good. And if there is a banker behind you, your life is much simpler. My young friends, please always remember that. Do not upset the banker. Keep them happy.

#### Message for Young Entrepreneurs

You must acquire the habit of listening. Let everybody speak their mind. And you should take the mic at the last. Of course, in between you can intervene and contradict. You must earn the respect of the people. You should try to conduct a meeting or run an organization through respect, not fear. I always say that respect is probably a much stronger affection than love.

Interviewed by Dr. Melita Mehjabeen, Associate Professor, IBA University of Dhaka.

A Prerona Foundation initiative, supported by MGM Consulting, The Daily Star and Daily Samakal.

> fou can watch this interview on the official YouTube channel of Prerona Foundation

e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net DHAKA TUESDAY DECEMBER 29, 2020, POUSH 14, 1427 BS

T SPORTS Federation Cup Brothers Union vs Uttar Baridhara Live from 3:15 pm Saif Sporting vs Arambagh Live from 5:45 pm PTV SPORTS New Zealand vs Pakistan First Test (Day 5)

Live from 4:00 am (Wednesday) **STAR SPORTS** South Africa vs Sri Lanka First Test (Day 4) Live from 2:00 pm **STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 English Premier League Brighton vs Arsenal** Live from 12:00 am (Wednesday)

Manchester United vs Wolves Live from 2:00 am (Wednesday) STAR SPORTS SELECT 2 English Premier League Leeds vs West Brom Live from 12:00 am (Wednesday) FACEBOOK La Liga Sevilla vs Villareal

Live from 10:00 pm Eiber vs Barcelona Live 12:15 am (Wednesday) Levante vs Betis Live from 2:30 am (Wednesday) Cadiz vs Valladolid Live from 2:30 am (Wednesday)



Bashundhara Kings players celebrate Argentine striker Raul Becerra's (2nd from L) all-important goal against Chattogram Abahani in yesterday's Walton Federation Cup match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Kings ride on Becerra

#### SPORTS REPORTER



quarterfinals of the Walton Federation Cup as Group C champions following a hard-fought 1-0 win over Chattogram Abahani at the

Bangabandhu National Stadium vesterday Argentine striker Raul Becerra

scored the decisive goal four minutes into the second half to ensure Kings' third consecutive last-eight berth in season's curtain-raising tournament with an all-win record. Chattogram Abahani, too, qualified for the last eight, but behind Kings as runnersup from this group with a win and a defeat.

Having already quarterfinal berths beating last edition's runners-up Rahmatganj in their previous matches, both teams had the target of getting the better of the other. Star-studded Kings pressed from the start against a team they had lost 4-3 in the abandoned Bangladesh Premier League encounter last season

Despite playing with one less foreigner, the port city outfit kept the defending champions at bay in the first half with an impregnable four-man backline, which brilliantly thwarted every attack while generating moves to launch attacks on the break

The first half was fought almost equally with neither side creating clear-cut chances except for one by Kings, who saw Mahbubur Rahman

confirmed Sufil provided with an excellent later before Mannaf Rabbi failed to through-ball with only goalkeeper Mohammad Nayeem to beat in the stoppage time of the first half. But the national team forward tried to make space instead of chipping it over the goalkeeper, resulting in a missed opportunity.

Chattogram Abahani were on the backfoot immediately after the restart as their Brazilian forward Nixon Guylherme limped off with an injury. Kings started to press and earned a corner four minutes into the second half which resulted in the decisive goal. Brazilian forward Robson Da Silva curled the corner towards the far post and with Nayeem completely misjudging the flight of the ball, Becerra was at hand to head it in.

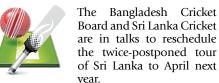
Sufil narrowly missed the target from a counter-attack eight minutes

equalise for Chattogram Abahani on the hour-mark. Substitute Rakib Hossain had whipped in a terrific cross for Rabbi, who, despite a lunging dive, could not connect to the ball in front of goal.

Right-back Mohammad Rocky then delivered a well-judged cross for onrushing Charles Didier, but Kings' Iranian defender Khaled Shafiei cleared the danger for a corner. Kings coach Oscar Bruzon sent Masuk Mia Jonny and Mohammad Ibrahim in place of Biplu Ahmed and Emon Mahmud to strengthen the forwardline, but there were no more goals in the game as the reigning champions left the pitch satisfied with a singlegoal victory following their emphatic 3-0 win over Rahmatganj in their opening match.

# SLC proposes shifting Tigers' tour to April

#### SPORTS REPORTER



The tour of Sri Lanka was originally scheduled for July-August, 2020, with Bangladesh scheduled to play a three-Test series under the ICC Test Championship. The tour was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Later, the two boards were in discussions about arranging the series in October, but the BCB did not agree to the strict quarantine protocols set by the hosts of staying in a mandatory 14-day quarantine after the Tigers reached the island nation.

"We are in talks with the Sri Lankan cricket board and basically the proposal came from their side. When we were in talks about the Sri Lanka tour in the first stage -- which didn't happen at that time -- we were principally in agreement to play the Test series under the ICC Test Championship in Sri Lanka," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told reporters yesterday.

"We are working on finding a window according to the Future Tour Programme and at this stage, we are targeting this tour in April as both countries have an available slot during that time." Meanwhile, the board is also confident about hosting the West Indies in January in a bio-secure bubble by drawing from the experience of hosting two domestic competitions recently.

According to the BCB CEO, the board has been working on a smooth health safety plan to bring international cricket back to Bangladesh as the visitors are scheduled to play a two-match Test and three-match ODI series. Nizamuddin also said the BCB have almost finalised the Tigers' new batting consultant ahead of the West Indies series and will make an announcement soon.



# Kohli, Perry dominate ICC decade honours

men's categories and Australia all- Champions Trophy as well as the team's rounder Ellyse Perry swept the women's honours in the International Cricket Council's (ICC) "Awards of the Decade" announced on Monday. Kohli was declared the best male player of the decade, as well as the top ODI player. Prolific Australia batsman Steve Smith bagged the Test award to deny Kohli a clean sweep. Perry, 30, was adjudged the best woman player as well as the premier ODI and Twenty20 player. "It has been tremendous to develop the women's T20 game and take it forward," Perry said. "Amazing to see where it's come from when I was introduced to it." "It's a great honour for me to receive this award," Kohli, who returned from India's ongoing tour of Australia to attend the birth of his first child, said in votes from fans and experts.

এবার যাত্রা

a video. Kohli listed India's triumphs in India captain Virat Kohli topped two the 2011 ODI World Cup and 2013



India close in on victory Adelaide-like miracle to prevent India

levelling the battle 1-1. Leading the side just days after a

humiliating defeat in the series-opener at Adelaide Oval, Rahane earned praise from the cricket fraternity for the manner in which he handled his bowlers and his field placements at Melbourne.

**REUTERS, WELLINGTON** New Zealand's bowlers

took a couple of rain and hail shower delays in their

New Zeland tighten grip on Pakistan

**REUTERS**, Dubai



#### **REUTERS, MELBOURNE**

Six-times champion Roger Federer has withdrawn from the Australian Open as he continues to work his way back to fitness from two knee operations earlier this year, his agent said.

The 39-year-old Swiss last played a competitive match at the seasonopening Grand Slam in January before he had to undergo surgery on his knee. He later required a second operation.

The start of the 2021 Australian Open has been delayed for three weeks until February 8 due to the country's strict border rules to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Federer, who had been training at his off-season base in Dubai, had told organisers that the delayed start to the tournament could benefit him.

However, his agent Tony Godsick said Federer was not quite ready to return.

"Roger has decided not to play the 2021 Australian Open," Godsick said in a statement. "He has made strong progress in the last couple of months with his knee and his fitness.

"However, after consultation with his team, he decided that the best decision for him in the long run is to return to competitive tennis after the Australian Open."

Godsick added that he was looking to build a playing calendar for Federer from late February.

Australian Open tournament director Craig Tiley said they were disappointed to lose Federer for next year's event.

With Umesh lost to a calf strain after lunch, spin-bowling all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja chipped in two wickets and seamers Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj took one apiece to leave Australia 133 for six at stumps, clinging to a lead of two runs at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Ajinkya Rahane paid tribute to his bowlers but said there was work still to be done. "The bowlers bowled really well and bowled in the right areas. We still got four wickets to go, the game is not over yet," he told broadcasters.

The Australia batting that failed to reach 200 in the two previous completed innings of this series lurched further into crisis today to be 6-133 and, with fine weather forecast for Melbourne over the remaining two days, in need of another

"Captaincy is all about bac instinct. You've got to back your gut feeling. Credit to the bowlers, they bowled in the right areas," he added.

India, anchored by stand-in captain Ajinkya Rahane's inspirational century on day two, were bowled out for 326 before lunch in reply to Australia's first innings 195.

"It was really special. Getting a century always is. Still feel that my hundred against England at Lord's is my best," Rahane said after the day's play.

The unassuming Indian entered the Lord's Honours Board when he struck an elegant 103 off 154 balls during the Indian team's tour of England in 2014.

India's batsmen are highly unlikely to produce another Adelaide-style horror show where they dismissed for 36.

stride and slowly broke down Pakistan's stubborn resistance to help the hosts take control of the first Test

on Monday. Faheem Ashraf was dismissed for 91, his highest Test score, just before the close of the third day's play at Bay Oval as Pakistan were bowled out for 239, still 192 runs

behind New Zealand's 431 The tourists had been facing the prospect of being asked to bat again after captain Mohammad

Rizwan's run out but Faheem saw them past the follow-on.

maiden test series victory in Australia under his captaincy two years ago as special moments. "I have relished all the battles in the last decade," Kohli said.

"I played against some great bowlers in the past and continued to play some quality bowlers even today." "I take a lot of pride in competing against the best, testing myself out against the best in tough conditions.'

Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan was named the best male Twenty20 cricketer of the decade and former India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni bagged the spirit of cricket award.

A nomination panel shortlisted the candidates based on their performances between January, 2011 and October, 2020. and the winners were decided by

**JAMUNABANK** 



# A MIGHTY KNOCK ENDS JUST SHY OF FULFILLMENT

Faf du Plessis celebrated his first hundred in two years by raising both arms in the air and unleashing a beaming smile in the direction of his teammates sitting outside the dressing room during third day of first Test against Sri Lanka in Centurion yesterday. He was just one run shy of his maiden double hundred but his career-best 199 in his first Test since giving up the captaincy gave South Africa a stellar first-innings total of 621 and a lead of 225.

#### 'No plans to become a coach'

**REUTERS, BARCELONA** 

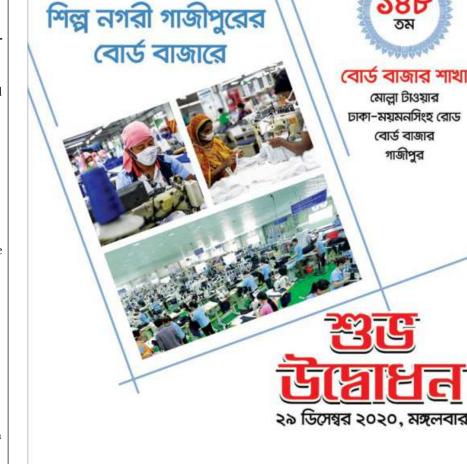
Lionel Messi has no plans to become a coach when he retires from playing, saying he is more interested in being a director of football than working in the unforgiving world of football management. The 33-year-old

Argentine forward has about six months left on his contract with Barcelona and the football world is on tenterhooks over whether he will stay at the club where he has spent the last 20 years or look for a new challenge.

"I don't see myself as a coach, perhaps a sporting director to hire players I want or that the club that I'm at needs," Messi said in an interview with Spanish network La Sexta on Sunday. Messi will wait until the

end of the season before making his mind up but said he would like to return to Barca, regardless of what he does next. "I would like to tell the

Barca fans that I'm not sure whether I'll leave or not.," he said.



S www.jamunabankbd.com





City

# Bogura Mahasthangarh Fort city open to destruction

Artifacts get damaged, new houses built on the site; 393 acres of its land still not acquired despite HC order MOSTAFA SHABUJ, Bogura

The Department of Archaeology continues to struggle to save one of the country's and region's most significant archaeological sites, Mahasthangarh in Bogura, due to the delay in acquiring 393 acres of land in the fort city.

Local villagers have constructed houses and other structures such as wells and drains on the land of Mahasthangarh over decades, despite these being a violation of the Antiquities Act-1968 and a 2012 High Court order.

They are also directly damaging the site and its archaeological antiques by taking bricks from the ancient structures, according to DoA officials.

The officials say they have been trying to obstruct new constructions there but locals managed to build around 1,000 structures including houses at the site over the years, taking advantage of poor monitoring by the department which has a manpower shortage.

Following the High Court order, the DoA beefed up vigilance and were able to halt the construction of new buildings. But its vigilance weakened again amid the pandemic and several unfinished brick houses were completed while construction of new structures began over these months.

Only 42.78 acres of land in Mahasthangarh fort city actually belongs to the DoA. The remaining small parts of land include 22.78 acres which constitute the fort city's SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

### ENCROACHING ON HIGHWAYS Cabinet okays stern punishment

Draft act says one could get 2 years in jail TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

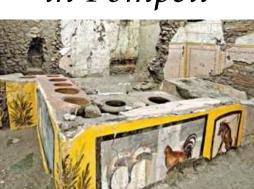
Anyone who erects a permanent or makeshift structure or sets up a market on the highways without prior approval may face a maximum of two years in prison or a fine between Tk 50,000 and Tk 5 lakh, or both.

This is according to the draft Highway Act-2020 approved in principle by the cabinet yesterday, with an aim to make the construction, development and maintenance of highways timely and to



A convoy of buses carry Rohingya refugees for being relocated to Bhashan Char in the Bay of Bengal from Ukhia, Cox's Bazar yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



#### SK SINHA'S TRIAL His brother, nephew testify against him

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The elder brother of former Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha and one of his nephews yesterday gave their depositions before a Dhaka court in a money laundering case.

They are SK Sinha's brother Narendra Kumar Sinha and nephew Shankhajit Sinha.

Judge Shaikh Nazmul of the Alam Special Judge's Court-4 of Dhaka recorded their statements. The defence for the accused cross-examined Narendra, but could not complete cross-examining Shankhajit.

Meanwhile, Mahbubul Haque Chisty, one of the accused, fell sick on the dock and he was taken to Dhaka National Hospital.

The judge then fixed January 13 for the next hearing of the case.

In their statements Narendra and Shankhajit told the court that as per direction of SK Sinha, a joint account was opened SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

#### Hajj, umrah law approved in principle STAFF CORRESPONDENT

cabinet yesterday The approved the draft of "Hajj and Umrah Management Law-2020" in principle to bring more discipline in this sector.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chaired the regular cabinet meeting, joining it virtually from the Gono Bhaban, while her cabinet colleagues attended the meeting at the secretariat.

Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam briefed reporters after the

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES Top priority given to agriculture: Bangabandhu Indian Law

#### India lifts ban on onion exports **REUTERS**, Mumbai

India yesterday decided to lift a ban on onion exports from January 1, as prices have fallen sharply in the last few weeks on expectations of a big crop. Exports of all varieties

of onion will be allowed, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a notification.

India banned exports of onions in September to preserve domestic supplies after flooding in several states worsened seasonal shortages, leading to a spike in local prices.

# Ancient snack stall uncovered in Pompeii

ensure discipline and safety of vehicular movement.

Under the draft law, even utility service providers -- both public and private -- may face similar punishment if they instal utility services without prior approval, because such unapproved works would be considered "invasion".

Anyone operating a slow-moving vehicle on roads without a dedicated lane or driving a vehicle that is unable to meet the minimum speed limit will be fine up to Tk 50,000, says the draft of the new law.

Once passed, the law will replace the near century-old Highway Act-1925, said officials concerned.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

December 29, 1972

Shamsuddoza Sajen

#### NATION FAST RECOVERING FROM DEVASTATION

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today says the country

is fast recovering from devastation and destruction wrought by the occupation of forces during the Liberation War and is making steady economic progress. While talking to the representatives of Oxfam, the prime minister focuses on the destruction and devastation in different sectors -- industrial, economic, communications, food and agriculture in particular. Talking about the national reconstruction, the prime minister says his SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

India is the world's biggest exporter of onions, a staple of South Asian cooking. Countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Malaysia and Sri Lanka rely on Indian shipments.

Wholesale prices of onions have more than halved in the last four weeks, according to data compiled by the National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation, a government agency.

#### **REUTERS**, Rome

Archaeologists in Pompeii, the city buried in a volcanic eruption in 79 AD, have made the extraordinary find of a frescoed hot food and drinks shop that served up the ancient equivalent of street food to Roman passersby.

Known as a termopolium, Latin for hot drinks counter, the shop was discovered in the archaeological park's Regio V site, which is not yet open the public, and unveiled on Saturday.

Traces of nearly 2,000-year-old food were found in some of the deep terra cotta jars containing hot SEE PAGE 10 COL 4 meeting.

He said the management has been operating through a policy till date and that is why the government faces difficulties while going to take any measure against any agency, as the agencies bring stay order from the High Court challenging any action.

After the new law enactment, he said the government can bring any hajj and umrah agency to SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

#### WUHAN VIRUS REPORTING Citizen journo jailed in China AFP, Shanghai

A Chinese citizen journalist was jailed for four years yesterday for her reporting from Wuhan as the Covid-19 outbreak unfurled, her lawyer said, almost a year after details

of an "unknown viral pneumonia" surfaced in the central China city. Zhang Zhan, a former lawyer, was sentenced at a brief hearing in a Shanghai court for

allegedly "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" during her reporting in the chaotic initial stages of the outbreak.

Her live reports and essays were shared on social media platforms in February, grabbing the SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



**PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 29** Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha AZAN 5-30 12-45 4-00 5-27 7-00 JAMAAT 6-05 1-15 4-15 5-30 7-30 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



# 14-day quarantine must for all UK returnees

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the UK returnees must stay in a 14-day institutional quarantine as the cabinet yesterday made it mandatory in the wake of the spread of a new variant of Covid-19 in the United Kingdom.

The decision came at the cabinet meeting held at the secretariat when another 161 passengers from the UK landed in Bangladesh yesterday amid news of the spread of a new strain of Covid-19 in the US.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chaired the meeting, joining it virtually from the Gono Bhaban, reports UNB.

"Every returnee, whoever arrives by London flights, will have to stay in quarantine. Even if he or she tested Covid-19 negative yesterday [a day before the journey], the person will have to stay in a 14-day quarantine compulsorily," said Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul while briefing reporters after the meeting.

There were two options -- suspension of flight operation with London or going for strict quarantine for London returnees -- at the meeting. Eventually, the cabinet decided to enforce stricter quarantine rules for them, he said.

The cabinet secretary said the returnees must stay in either the government quarantine or any hotel under supervision of the government.

A notification will be issued for the enforcement of the quarantine rule, said Secretary Anwarul.

After a meeting last night, Prof ABM Khurshid Alam, director general of Directorate General of Health Services, told this correspondent that the mandatory quarantine would be enforced from January.

Yesterday, 144 passengers landed at the Osmani International Airport, Sylhet, by a Biman flight from the UK and 17 others at the Hazrat Shahjalal International SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

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**Minister HR** 

Gokhale calls on

**Prime Minister** 

Bangabandhu

Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman at the

December 29,

1972.

Gono Bhaban on