



The Daily Star

www.thedailystar.net



REGD. No. DA 781

Vol. XXIX No. 207

BHADRA 2, 1426 BS

Your Right to Know

ZILHAJ 15, 1440 HURI

16 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00

High growth, fewer jobs

Despite high economic growth, agriculture, industry sectors unable to create enough jobs, shows govt study

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh's tremendous economic growth has been unable to create jobs proportionately over the past decade, raising questions about the significance of the growth for a large section of the population.

Besides, female participation in the labour force shrank in the last nine years, especially in rural areas, according to a government study on employment, productivity and sectoral investment in Bangladesh.

Employment elasticity, which indicates the ability of an economy to generate employment opportunities for its population as percent of its growth process, declined between fiscal 2005-06 and 2017-18, when the economy was apparently on tremendous growth momentum.

Between fiscal 2005-06 and 2009-10, the country's employment elasticity was 0.55. It plunged to 0.25 between fiscal 2010-11 and 2017-18, when the economy averaged 6.6 percent GDP growth.

Employment elasticity is a measure of the percentage change in employment associated with a 1 percentage point change in economic growth.

For example, employment elasticity of 0.01 implies that with every 1 percentage point growth in GDP, employment increased by just one basis point (one basis point is one-hundredth of a percentage point).

"In case of agriculture, manufacturing, construction and services sector, the employment elasticity is lower than 1, indicating that employment generation is not very sensitive to growth," said the study conducted by the General Economics Division under the planning ministry between May and June this year.

The major objective of the study, the first of its kind in the country, was to gain insight into the nexus of economic growth, employment generation, productivity and investment.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Passengers get off an overcrowded train at the capital's Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday. The railway, bus and launch terminals were bustling with people returning to the city after celebrating the Eid-ul-Azha with their families. Many trains to and from the capital ran behind schedule.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Parents, two siblings killed in road crash

STAR REPORT

They were about to join in a marriage ceremony to add more colour to their Eid celebration, but fate had other plans for them.

Five of a family from Netrakona's Durgapur upazila lost their lives while two others were critically injured in a road accident on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj highway yesterday.

The accident took place in Ramgopalpur area of Mymensingh's Gouripur upazila around 11:00am when a Kishoreganj-bound private car -- carrying the family members -- collided head-on with a Mymensingh-bound bus, said Kamrul Islam Mia, officer-in-charge of Gouripur Police Station.

Of the deceased, Nazmun Nahar Shaheen, 40, died on the spot. Her husband Rafik-uz-Zaman, 45, their son Nadim Hossain, 19, daughter Rounok Jahan, 13, and Nazmun's brother Zisan Kabir, 22, died after being rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH), the OC said.

Their three-year-old son Nahid Hossain and the car driver Swapan Miah, 30 were critically injured and currently receiving treatment at MMCH, he added.

Police seized the bus involved in the accident but the driver managed to flee, the OC added.

Talking to our Mymensingh

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Clashes in Kashmir amid lockdown

Cops fire teargas, pellet-firing shotguns at protesters; New Delhi says restoring phone lines after 12-day communication blackout; UNSC meeting on

AFP, Srinagar

Hundreds of protesters in Indian-administered Kashmir clashed with police on Friday, even as New Delhi said it would begin restoring phone lines after a 12-day communications blackout.

With the central government fearing protests and unrest, the Muslim-majority northern territory has been under lockdown since the first week of August, when the Indian government stripped the region of its autonomy.

The clashes came as, the UN Security Council was set to discuss the situation behind closed doors later yesterday, diplomats said.

Police fired tear gas and pellet-firing shotguns to disperse residents who tried to march down the main road in the main city of Srinagar after Friday prayers.

Protesters hurled stones and used shop hoardings and tin sheets as improvised shields, as police shot dozens of rounds into the crowd. No injuries were reported.

"We are trying to breach the siege and march to the city centre but police is using force to stop us," one protester told AFP, adding that three people were injured in Thursday clashes with police officers and reservists.

Sporadic clashes were also reported in other parts of the Kashmir Valley, the main hotbed of resistance to Indian rule for decades, where phone lines and internet connections have been cut off for nearly two weeks.

Major towns and cities in the restive valley remained under curfew, with government forces allowing people to move only on special passes.

Government forces erected steep barricades and used concertina wires to block roads.

No big gatherings were allowed in the valley and most mosques were shut for the second consecutive Friday.

"We want what is ours. We are not begging for anything but demand

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

65 Bangladeshi, Lankan migrants found in Mexico

They were on way to US border

AP, Mexico City

Mexican authorities say federal police found 65 severely dehydrated and hungry migrants from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka wandering on a highway in the Gulf coast state of Veracruz.

The federal Public Safety Department said Thursday that the migrants recounted a long, complicated trip in a bid to reach the US border.

The migrants reported they set out April 24 from an airport in Qatar and flew to Turkey and Colombia. From there, they moved through Ecuador, Panama and Guatemala before reaching Mexico.

Once in Mexico, the migrants said, they boarded boats and travelled on the Coatzacoalcas River, though it is not clear why. The river does not lead anywhere near the US border.

The migrants were later transferred to a migratory

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

JMB men on the loose a big concern

Police say many of the convicted militants are outside their radar

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Many of the JMB men convicted in the August 17 series bomb blast cases walked out of prison after serving their jail term and it remains a big challenge for law enforcers to keep them under surveillance, say counterterrorism officials.

Police could not give the exact number of the JMB extremists who went out of jail in the cases filed over the attack in 2005, but one counterterrorism official said they have information the figure would be around 50.

Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime officials said since the cases were filed under the Explosives Substances Act and the highest punishment is 10 years' imprisonment, many of the convicts have already completed their jail terms.

On this day in 2005, around 500 bombs went off at 300 locations in 63 out of the 64 districts across the country. The bombs exploded in half an hour from 11:30am.

Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), a banned militant outfit, carried out the attack and claimed responsibility for it.

Some 159 cases were filed in connection with the attack. Investigators pressed charges against 1,072 militants in 142 of the cases. Final reports were placed in the rest 17 cases.

According to Police Headquarters statistics, 322 accused were convicted while 358 were acquitted till September last year. As many as 133 accused were on bail. The rest are

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Bhola gangrape victim slightly better

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Condition of the sixth-grader gangraped in Bhola on August 11 has slightly improved as the bleeding stopped yesterday.

But she is still in pain and is given pain killers, said Bilkis Begum, coordinator of One Stop Crisis Centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Meanwhile, her brother told The Daily Star yesterday that his family was feeling insecure and threatened because the brother of an accused rapist told people that he would take revenge for his brother's death in a "shootout".

"A brother of [rape accused] Manjur told people that his brother was killed because of us. So, they will take revenge one day. We are feeling insecure," he said.

He added that rape accused Al Amin and Manjur Alam, who were killed in a "shootout" with officers on Wednesday, were yaba traders and had links with many powerful people in the area.

The 12-year-old girl was brought to the DMCH early

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

DENGUE OUTBREAK



NEW CASES IN
LAST 24 HRS
1,719

TOTAL DENGUE
CASES
49,999

OUTSIDE DHAKA
960

DEATH
93
(40 OFFICIAL)

UNDERGOING
TREATMENT
7,716

SOURCE: DGHS



To check spread of dengue virus, mosquito nets have been put up at a ward designated for dengue patients at the city's Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital. The photo was taken yesterday.

AEDES BREEDING

Terminals still a hotspot

Eid holidaymakers returning to city amid concern as dengue patients near 50,000 mark



HELEMIUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Major terminals in the capital remain ripe for Aedes breeding as hundreds of thousands of people are arriving in the city after the holidays.

Discarded tires and plastic containers still litter the bus terminals in Mohakhali and Gabtali, Tejgaon truck terminal and Kamalapur Railway Station.

The terminal in Mohakhali is particularly risky with piles of old tires containing puddles of rainwater ideal for breeding the dengue causing mosquito.

"We started getting rid of the tires after the Dhaka North City Corporation instructed us, but could not complete the task as owners of some tires have not returned from

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Italian political standoff keeps rescued migrants stranded at sea

REUTERS, Lampedusa

A charity rescue ship carrying 134 migrants, mostly Africans, waited off the coast of Italy yesterday as a battle between former political allies in Rome stopped it docking at the southern island of Lampedusa.

Interior Minister Matteo Salvini has ordered his officials to prevent the boat disembarking the migrants, who were rescued off Libya 16 days ago, in defiance of his own prime minister and despite six European Union nations agreeing to take them.

The migrants' plight underlines the breakdown of Italy's ruling coalition and how immigration has become central to Salvini's plan to take his right-wing League party out of government, drag the nation to elections and return to power as prime minister.

Five seriously traumatised people were moved off the Open Arms boat, run by the Spanish charity group of the same name, on Thursday, accompanied by four relatives. Three more three requiring urgent medical attention were taken ashore during the night along with one companion, Open Arms said on Twitter.

"They are self-harming and getting angry with other people in the group," Alessandro di Benedetto, a psychologist with Italian aid group Emergency, told RAI radio after examining the five people who were brought ashore on Thursday.

Terminals still

FROM PAGE 1
vacation yet," said Saddam Hossain of a tire shop at the terminal.

At Gabtali terminal, many abandoned tires and fuel containers with clear water were found yesterday.

"We had no idea that this water could breed Aedes," said Mohammad Shakil, owner of a small fuel shop at the terminal.

Piles of abandoned plastic bottles and plastic containers were found near platform-1 in Kamalapur Railway Station.

A recent study by the Directorate General of Health Services found 112 wet plastic containers, five of them containing Aedes larva, in Gabtali Bus Terminal.

The researchers found 292 such containers, of which 92 had the larva, in Mohakhali terminal. At Sayedabad terminal, five of 28 containers spotted had the larva.

At BRTC Bus Depot in Kamalapur, five out of 58 containers found had larva while at Kamlapur railway police outpost, one of nine containers found had larva.

In Mirpur-12 BRTC Bus Depot, three of 55 wet containers had larva.

The study was conducted from July 31 to August 4 at 14 places including

"Some of them are having suicidal thoughts, so they think it is better to die here than go back there," he added.

Salvini's tough anti-immigration stance has helped boost his popularity at the expense of coalition partners the 5-Star Movement, but his surprise bid to bring down the government and call an election is running into trouble.

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, who belongs to no political party but is close to 5-Star, accused Salvini on Thursday of exploiting the issue and said he had convinced six European states to take in the migrants.

Defence Minister Elisabetta Trenta, who is from the 5-Star, refused to countersign Salvini's emergency decree.

The Open Arms is anchored off the coast of Lampedusa, which was the scene of mass arrivals for years before Salvini closed Italy's ports to the charity ships who rescue people setting out from Africa in search of a better life in Europe.

Salvini has argued that Italy, which lies close to the Libyan coast, should no longer be the main gateway for migrants fleeing Africa for Europe. He accuses the charities of becoming "taxis" for people-smuggling gangs.

The Open Arms boat was allowed into Italian waters on Thursday after an administrative court in Rome overruled a ban on its entering that Salvini had previously imposed.

Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Mugda Medical College Hospital, Rajarbagh Police Lines, Shajahanpur Slum, Kalshi, ECB Chattar, Mirpur-12 Metro Rail project and Korail slum in Gulshan.

The two medical college hospitals were found to be an ideal breeding ground for Aedes.

Of the larva containing places, 78.17 percent were discarded tires, 4.93 percent plastic containers, 4.23 percent plastic buckets, 2.11 percent discarded or broken commodes, 0.70 percent plastic mugs and 2.82 percent other objects.

Dhaka South City Corporation mayor Sayeed Khokon said he had asked Khondaker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners' Association, to destroy all Aedes mosquito sources at the terminals.

After the DGHS survey, the city corporation officials informed the health minister about the risk of Aedes breeding at some hospitals.

Khondaker Enayet said they took different initiatives before Eid.

"We will take strict measures again to destroy the sources of Aedes at bus terminals," he said.

JMB men

FROM PAGE 1
still facing trial.

Contacted, Md Moniruzzaman, additional deputy inspector general of police of the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU), said the JMB had no organisational strength, but the outfit was still active and "It will do something if it gets a chance".

"Although chances of an organised attack are very slim, risk is still there," he said.

On the other hand, the capacity of law enforcers, including online surveillance, has increased, he said.

Moniruzzaman also said they keep record of the militants involved in the 2005 series bomb blasts, their modus operandi and types of explosives they used.

Moreover, the ATU analyses all bomb attack incidents and often suggests other police units about measures required to tackle militancy.

"We are concerned about activities of JMB, Ansar Al Islam and Hizb ut-Tahrir. The overall capacity of JMB is higher than that of others," he said.

Asked whether such militants are under police radar, Soheli Rana, assistant inspector general (media) at Police Headquarters on Thursday said, a process of bringing all militant

suspects under monitoring had begun across the country.

The ATU has prepared a division-wise database of all militants.

"It is challenging to some extent as many go into hiding after being released," he said, adding that it was hard to track when anyone goes into hiding.

He said they always try to know every update of the militants and their whereabouts through contacting their family members, relatives and friends.

Besides, they try to find out those on the run, he said.

Meanwhile, the CTTC is providing assistance to five ex-JMB militants who, on completion of their jail term, returned to their families and families of three others who are in jail.

The move has been taken recently so that JMB cannot reengage them in militant activities, Saiful Islam, deputy commissioner of the unit, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We often see that militant outfits take financial responsibility of the families of their jailed members. We believe our initiative will keep them away from the path of militancy," he added.

Parents, two siblings killed

FROM PAGE 1
correspondent, Salma Begum, aunt of Nazmun, said the family was going to attend a wedding ceremony.

Meanwhile, in Tangail, two people were killed and three others were injured in two road accidents in the district's Bhuapur and Nagarpur upazilas yesterday morning.

The dead are Abdul Mannan, 62, from Jamalpur's Sarishabari upazila and Abdul Koddus Miah, 70, from Tangail's Nagarpur upazila.

In Patuakhali, two men, who were critically wounded in separate road accidents, succumbed to their injuries yesterday.

Abdur Rob Sikder, 65, was from

Patuakhali Sadar upazila and Monir Hossain was from the district's Bauphal upazila, police said.

In Rajbari, a boy was killed and four people were injured in a road crash on Rajbari-Kushitia regional highway in early yesterday.

Shamim Hossain, 15, was from Meherpur's Gangni upazila.

Earlier on Thursday, at least 20 people were killed and 82 others were injured in separate road accidents in eight districts.

Of the dead, seven were killed in Feni, four in Faridpur, three in Kishoreganj, two in Sirajganj, and one each in Gopalganj, Mymensingh, Barishal and Tangail.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and senior Awami League leaders observe a minute's silence in memory of Bangabandhu and the other victims of the August 15 carnage at a programme at the city's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday. The event was organised marking the 44th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the National Mourning Day.

PHOTO: PTD

Trump proposes mental asylums, but silent on gun laws

AFP, Manchester

More mental hospitals are needed to take potential mass killers off the streets, President Donald Trump said Thursday in response to recent mass shootings, while staying quiet on a pledge to toughen gun laws.

Speaking to a crowd of supporters estimated at around 12,000 in Manchester, New Hampshire, Trump did not once mention his efforts to push for background checks on would-be gun purchasers.

Instead, he focused on the theory that the endless spate of mass killings carried out by men with easily obtained semi-automatic rifles is mostly down to lack of mental facilities.

Trump said he was giving "major consideration to building new facilities for those in need" and "taking mentally deranged and dangerous people off the streets."

"We don't have those institutions anymore," he said.

Trump has consistently put an accent on mental health problems, rather than

the ubiquitous firearms sold everywhere from shopping malls to gun fairs.

But after the deaths of 31 people in massacres in Texas and Ohio, within hours of each other earlier this month, Trump did come out strongly for increased background checks to verify the records of the person buying a gun.

Even this measure is vehemently opposed by hardline gun rights defenders who say the constitutionally protected right to owning weapons is under threat.

Clashes in Kashmir amid lockdown

FROM PAGE 1
India should respect its promises," a second protester told AFP.

"We will not sit back until we achieve complete independence from India," he said.

The protesters marched along the lanes of Srinagar, carrying black flags -- signifying grief -- and placards with slogans including "Go India, go back".

The clashes took place as a top official said that authorities would begin restoring phone lines in Kashmir yesterday evening, including in Srinagar.

Jammu and Kashmir chief secretary BVR Subrahmanyam did not make clear whether mobile phones and internet connections would also be reinstated.

He said the restoration would "(keep) in mind the constant threat posed by terrorist organisations in using mobile connectivity to organised terrorist actions".

Fearing an angry and potentially violent response to its move to end

Kashmir's autonomous status, India deployed 10,000 additional troops -- joining the half a million already there -- severely restricted movement and cut telecommunications.

Kashmiri politicians -- alongside university professors, business leaders and activists -- are among the more than 500 people that have since been taken into custody.

Celebrations for Eid, a major Muslim festival, were massively curtailed on Monday, with Srinagar's main mosque shut. The building remained off-limits yesterday.

Subrahmanyam said the government was aiming for the "earliest return to normalcy while ensuring that terrorist forces are given no opportunity to wreak havoc as in the past".

Despite the lockdown, last Friday residents said some 8,000 people took to the streets and that the military used pellet-firing shotguns.

The Indian government confirmed the clashes only after several days

had passed, blaming them on stone-throwing "miscreants" and saying its forces reacted with "restraint".

Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since independence from Britain in 1947.

Tens of thousands of people, most of them civilians, have died in an uprising against Indian rule that has raged since 1989.

The territory has been the spark for two wars and countless clashes between the two nuclear-armed arch-rivals, most recently in February when they conducted tit-for-tat air strikes.

Officials in the part of Kashmir ruled by Pakistan said Thursday that three soldiers died in Indian shelling across the Line of Control, the de facto border, with two others killed in a separate incident.

The Pakistani military also said its return fire killed five Indian soldiers. But an Indian army spokesman told the Press Trust of India news agency late Thursday this was "fictitious".

High growth, fewer jobs

FROM PAGE 1
The services sector is the only sector that saw an increase in employment elasticity: from 0.27 in fiscal 2009-10 to 0.40 in fiscal 2017-18.

In case of agriculture, it sank to -0.09 between fiscal 2010-11 and 2017-18 from 0.71 between fiscal 2005-06 and 2009-10.

Employment elasticity decreased in the construction sector too -- from 2.22 in fiscal 2009-10 to 0.55 in fiscal 2017-18 -- at a time when the government is implementing a host of mega projects, and there is a construction boom in the country.

Government spending has increased in the construction sector but the expenditure is for big projects like Dhaka Metro Rail and Padma bridge, which are capital intensive in nature, mentioned the study.

"Therefore, the construction sector has failed to generate enough employment in spite of increased public spending," it added.

Also in the manufacturing sector, employment elasticity came down to 0.65 in fiscal 2017-18 from 0.87 in fiscal 2009-2010.

The study attributed the decline to two simultaneous phenomena: the structural transformation in the economy from agriculture to industrial sector, and industrial sector being more capital intensive.

The garment and textile industries account for a major chunk of the country's manufacturing sector, and both are becoming more capital intensive rather than labour intensive.

"The non-garment part of the manufacturing sector has remained static," the study mentioned.

Talking to The Daily Star, Zahid Hussain, former lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office, said, "Overall employment elasticity declined because the decrease in employment elasticity in agriculture and industry far outweighed the increase in employment elasticity in services."

Employment elasticity in

agriculture turned negative as the demand for farm labour dropped with rapidly growing mechanisation of agricultural production processes, he pointed out.

The other reasons include an increased use of high-yielding non-labour inputs and decreased preference for farm work, Zahid mentioned.

"The decline in overall employment elasticity from 0.55 during 2005-10 to 0.25 during 2010-18 reflects to a significant extent the movement of people from agriculture to services.

"Despite sustained expansion in agricultural activities, employment in agriculture declined from 26.2 million in 2010 to 25 million in 2018 while employment in services increased from 19.8 million to 23.8 million respectively. This is why employment elasticity in agriculture has declined from 0.71 to -0.09 while it increased from 0.27 to 0.4 in services.

"Employment in industry increased from 12.1 million in 2010 to 13.1 million in 2018 -- just by one million in eight years -- despite acceleration of industrial growth from 8 percent on average during 2005-10 to 9.6 percent during 2010-18.

"Despite rising growth in industrial output, growth of labour demand in industry was weak because of low investment growth, higher capital intensity of industrial production processes and the spread of automation.

In recent years, industrial growth came more from capital intensive manufacturing and construction sectors that are domestic market-oriented, rather than the labour intensive export-oriented sectors, he pointed out.

According to Zahid, a big setback in the growth process has been the loss of female participation in employment. By all metrics, their contribution to the economy was lower in 2018 than in 2010.

"Weak growth of labour demand affected females more than males.

Instead of continuing to actively seek employment, discouraged female labour appears to have opted out of the labour market ...," he noted.

The number of unemployed females increased to 1.2 million in 2018 from 1 million in 2010, while the number of females in employment dropped to 16 million last year from 16.2 million in 2010.

In rural areas, 12.6 million females were employed in 2010. The number fell to 11.6 million in 2018.

The study suggested a proper employment strategy for promoting female participation in the labour force.

"Opportunities need to be opened up and the barriers to female labour force participation need to be eliminated." Women are often subjected to violence, and laws regarding this need to be made more stringent, it noted.

Infrastructure such as childcare facilities at workplaces, increase in access to education and training, availability of maternity leave and growth of industries where large number of women are involved will help matters, it pointed out.

Better implementation of laws is necessary to provide an enabling working environment for women. "This will also ensure better wages and also the status of women at the workplace."

It also suggested conducive monetary and fiscal policies for improving employment elasticity and steps to help the sectors overcome the financing and unskilled labour problems.

Automation or advanced technology may displace some workers but this will be compensated by jobs created elsewhere in the economy.

"However, since further advancement of technology will require high-skilled labour, focusing on demand-driven skill development system should be the priority for Bangladesh," it added.

Police rescue child who was sold after kidnapping

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Police on Thursday rescued a child -- who had been abducted and sold a day ago -- from Sunamganj's Jamalganj upazila and arrested two people in this connection.

Three-year-old Rafsan was handed over to his parents, said Mizanur Rahman, superintendent of police in the district, during a press brief at his office yesterday.

The arrestees are Jobeda Begum from Lakshmipur village and Jasim Uddin from Sardarpur village.

Police said Jobeda kidnapped the child from Lakshmipur on Wednesday and brought him to Sardarpur.

She claimed the child to be her son and expressed interest to the villagers in selling off the child saying that was unable to take care of it due to poverty, police said.

One Kabir Mia took the child in exchange for only Tk 7,000.

On information, police went to Sardarpur on Thursday night and rescued the child, police said, adding that they had arrested Kabir from the spot.

Later, police arrested Jobeda based on Kabir's information.

Zimbabwe police break up protests after court ban

AFP, Harare

Riot police in Zimbabwe yesterday fired teargas and beat demonstrators during a crackdown on opposition supporters who have taken to Harare's streets despite a protest ban.

Scores of people gathered in the capital's Africa Unity Square to demonstrate against the country's worsening economy in defiance of the ban, which was upheld by a court today.

Supporters of Zimbabwe's opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) sang songs condemning police brutality as officers fired teargas to disperse them.

65 Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 1
centre in the municipality of Acayucan, where their legal status will be defined.

After their nationalities are recognised, they will be given assistance to return to their countries.

The Mexican government reported on Wednesday that the country has intercepted 19,005 endangered migrants since the 7 June immigration agreement with the US. Many attempt crossing the border in overcrowded buses and cargo trucks.

Bhola gangrape

FROM PAGE 1
Thursday after doctors at multiple hospitals in Bhola and Barishal failed to stop the bleeding from her private parts. Doctors said she needed 22 stitches for wounds to her private parts and there were numerous cuts in her toes and back.

The girl of Bhola town was raped at her neighbour and aunt's house when she went there to have mehendi on her arms on the eve of Eid. As she was waiting at the veranda of the house for her aunt, Al Amin, 27, a tenant of the building, gagged her with a strip of cloth and forced her into his room, police said.

Amin and his associate Manjur Alam, 25, then tied her up and raped her, they added.

Another young man named Jamal Akand has been accused of assisting the duo in the crime, said Sagir Mia, officer-in-charge of Bhola Sadar Police Station.

Her father filed a case accusing the trio. Jamal was sent to jail.

Non-profit Coast Trust has been assisting the girl's family in bearing the treatment and legal costs.

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Pied Bushchat (female) at Purbachol.

PHOTO:
IHTISHAM KABIR

The Pied Bushchat

I first met her on Christmas Day a few years ago. In the late winter afternoon I was looking for birds in a large field in Purbachol. I found her perched on the very top of an *Akond* shrub. I couldn't recognize her from a distance and, intrigued, came closer. Her underpart was cream coloured and she was brown on the top. Her wings had brown stripes and three dots near each shoulder. She was hardly larger than a sparrow. I photographed her, came closer and photographed her again.

She didn't seem to mind me, and, standing on one foot, seemed preoccupied with other things. Occasionally she dived to the ground, then returned to perch.

When I came too close, she flew off reluctantly, retaking her perch when I had backed off. Once she landed near my foot and - craning her neck - scolded me until I moved away.

I returned the next afternoon, a cooler day, to look for her. She had moved to a new location about ten feet from the *Akond*, on the top of an old dry bamboo erected for the fence of a vegetable patch in the middle of the field. She was puffed up like a ball in the cold and it took me some time to recognize her.

It was the time of year when many birds are around but she held her perch and did not share her territory. Shrikes and bulbuls came by and tried to land but she ferociously buzzed them, forcing them to keep their distance. She made short forays into the vegetable patch or dived into the grass, often emerging with a small insect in her mouth which she swallowed by the time she had

resumed her perch.

That night, I sent a photo of the bird to my birding friend Shahadat who identified it as a female Pied Bushchat. Females of many birds are harder to identify because they appear drab and lack the distinctive colours of the males. The male Pied Bushchat, for example, is black with some white on top. I had seen it before and would have recognized it instantly.

Pied Bushchats are flycatchers and live on insects they catch from the ground. They are found over a wide area from the Middle East to Southeast Asia. About five inches long, they are smaller than their more common cousin, the Siberian Stonechat. They nest in cavities on the ground or along riverbanks and are usually seen in open fields and scrubland. In Bangladesh they are seasonal visitors and considered somewhat uncommon.

A fascinating fact about Pied Bushchats is that they differ in appearance and colour in different islands such as Sulawesi, Flores and New Guinea. About sixteen races (subspecies) of the bird are recognized today.

I returned several times to the same spot at the same time in January to photograph her. Then, one day, she was gone. Perhaps she had found a mate and they had built a nest to raise a family. Maybe she had left for another year. Who knows?

And the field where I found her? Today, it is the intersection of two roads.

facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

'The most alone of poets'

Jibanananda Das through the lens of a Japanese filmmaker

AANILA KISHWAR TARANNUM

"I fell in love with how modern Jibanananda Das' work was, and how unusual the temperament behind it was. And it's not just his poetry, his life is just as interesting to me," said Japanese filmmaker Hiroshi Sunairi, who has been researching on Das for the past few months.

Currently a resident of New York City, Sunairi has made 16 films in 22 years -- each with a unique theme and location. His last film, "Qué Tan Lejos/How Far Am I", was about Mexican poet José Rico's return to his hometown Ciudad Juárez, and visiting old friends, family members and landscapes of the border town that was ravaged by the drug war.

Poetry has long been an area of interest for Sunairi, and his next film will be based on the life and works of Jibanananda Das, a poet overwhelmingly loved and revered by Bengali poetry lovers and enthusiasts. Sunairi has already made multiple visits to Das' birthplace, Barishal, for research.

"My 2013 experimental short film 'Where it flows out into the plains' was sort of a travelogue on India. I wanted to use some poetry recitation in the film, and my Indian associate producer suggested Jibanananda Das," Sunairi said over a Skype interview recently.

That is when he started reading Das' translated works, and connected with them deeply. "I became fascinated with how he was ahead of his time. I feel he was kind

of arrogant about this -- he knew how good he was. He was sort of an outcast... not really included in the writers' circle of the time. There was loneliness in his life -- both as a person and a writer," Sunairi said. "Das was very confident about his ability as a poet and writer. This confidence and loneliness made up such an interesting, almost hybrid kind of personality. He was

postmodern, in many ways," he added.

Das lived through some interesting times, especially partition in 1947. Sunairi picked up on this, and decided to make a biographical film. "At the same time, I read Jibanananda Das' short stories, and those were just like experimental cinema to me. The stories don't follow a specific

formula or chronology, yet some of the dialogues are so sharp and memorable," he said.

Sunairi is making two films: one, an experimental research documentary on Das, and another a fiction based on his short stories. During the months of June and July, Sunairi visited Kolkata and Barishal to get to know the poet

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Hiroshi Sunairi at work by the Dhanshiri river.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

DHAKA TODAY

CONFERENCE

On dengue prevention

Organiser: United Nations Youth & Students Association Bangladesh

Venue: Center for Men and Masculinities Studies, Dhanmondi

Time: 5pm

LITERARY EVENT

Remembering Bangabandhu

Organiser: Kendrio Khelaghar Asar

Venue: RC Majumder Auditorium, University of Dhaka

Time: 5pm

WORKSHOP

Introduction to Node.js

Venue: Tech Dojo, Airport Road

Time: 11am

CONFERENCE

Empowerment of Youth

& Women to Achieve SDG

Organiser: Dhaka Language Club

Venue: The Westin Dhaka, Gulshan-2

Time: 10am

PROGRAMMING CLASS

On Android Application Development

With Java SE

Organiser: Tech Trix

Venue: Muhammadiyah

Super Market, Sobhanbag

Time: 10:30am

A friend of the world

Diplomats remember Bangabandhu at discussion in Washington DC

BSS, Dhaka

Diplomats at a discussion in Washington DC have recalled the contribution of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in realising rights of the deprived, terming Bangabandhu a "Friend of the World".

They said the struggle and sacrifice of Bangabandhu in realising the rights of deprived people is a glowing example for the international community.

Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations arranged the discussion at the UN Headquarters in Washington DC on Thursday, marking the 44th martyrdom anniversary of Bangabandhu and his family members, according to an official message received yesterday.

Former UN Under Secretary General and former Bangladesh Permanent Representative to the UN Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Indian Permanent Representative to the UN Syed Akbaruddin, Serbian Permanent Representative Milan

Milanovic, Cuban Ambassador Ana Silvia Rodriguez Abascal, Palestine Permanent Representative Riyad H Mansour, Bangladesh Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Masud Bin Momen and president of the USA unit of Awami League Dr Siddiqur Rahman, among others, spoke at the discussion.

Ambassador Anwarul Karim said Bangabandhu, as a global leader, had played an outstanding role in achieving UN membership of Bangladesh. He highlighted a newly-born nation to the world, Karim added.

Recalling India's long-standing relations with Bangladesh, Syed Akbaruddin said August 15 is India's Independence Day, but when people of India heard that Bangabandhu and most of his family members were killed on August 15 in 1975, their mirth turned to mourning instantly.

He said the principle and ideology of Bangabandhu are being reflected in

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1



HAVING A BALL AT THE ZOO... yesterday, being a weekend, added an extra holiday to the Eid vacation and children along with their parents utilised it to the fullest by spending the day at Dhaka Zoo in Mirpur. Children were seen petting horses. Some leaned over the fence to see a herd of deer, while some little ones tried to draw the attention of a tiger.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Poet Shamsur Rahman's 13th death anniversary today

BSS, Dhaka



The 13th death anniversary of renowned poet Shamsur Rahman will be observed today.

Different socio-cultural organisations including Kabi Shamsur Rahman Smriti Parishad have drawn up various programmes to mark the day, said a press release.

Jatiya Kabita Parishad, Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, Kabi Shamsur Rahman Smriti Parishad and the poet's family members will place wreaths at this grave at Banani in the morning. The death anniversary will also be observed at his ancestral village in Raipura of Narsingdi through various programmes.

Rahman was born in Old Dhaka on October 23 in 1929. His poems largely feature the Liberation War.

Barnomala Amar Dukhina Barnomala, Asader Shirt, Tomake Pawar Jonno Hey Swadhinata and Udbhat Uter Pithe Cholechhe Swadesh are some his works depicting various aspects of national transitions at different times.

The number of books published in his lifetime is 112,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

BNP accuses govt of destroying leather industry

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday alleged that the government has destroyed the leather industry, after that of jute, in a planned way to make the country dependent on others.

"We earn foreign currency through the leather industry as rawhide is collected after every Eid-ul-Azha, but the government has destroyed it in a planned way. They did so in the past, too," said BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir.

Speaking at a doa mahfil, he further said, "The government has made good progress in making Bangladesh a subservient country as part of its far-reaching plot. They (govt) are not only repressing people, but also playing the biggest role in turning the country into a dependent one."

BNP arranged the programme at its Nayapaltan central office, where party leaders and activists prayed for their incarcerated chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Recalling their party chairperson's contributions to the socio-economic development of the country, Fakhru bemoaned that the government has kept her in jail deliberately to cripple the country

and its economy.

He alleged that the government has destroyed all the democratic institutions to hang onto power. "The judiciary has been harmed badly and it has completely lost its independence."

Branding the government "unelected and fascist", the BNP leader said it is now oppressing political and democratic activists by establishing its "control" over the judiciary.

Fakhru regretted that their party could not free their ailing chairperson through a strong movement yet.

He urged BNP leaders and activists to unite to have their chairperson released from jail through street agitations. "We have no alternative to intensifying the movement to free her."

Later, a munajat was offered, seeking the well-being of Khaleda.

BNP standing committee members Moudud Ahmed, Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, Nazrul Islam Khan, Selima Rahman; vice chairmen Shamsuzzaman Dudu, AZM Jahid Hossain, Netai Roy Chowdhury, Shawkat Mahmud;

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY
Progoti Foundation for Education and Development
Permanent Sanad Holder

Admission, Fall 2019

Fully-Owned Beautiful Campus

Annual Scholarships of Ten Crore Taka

Teaching Assistantships

Group Insurance for Students

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

<p>BBA</p> <p>BSS in Economics</p> <p>BA in English</p> <p>BSS in Sociology</p> <p>BSS in Information Studies and Library Management</p> <p>LLB (Hons)</p>	<p>B.Sc</p> <p>Computer Science & Engineering</p> <p>Electronic and Telecommunication Engineering</p> <p>Information and Communications Engineering</p> <p>Electrical and Electronic Engineering</p> <p>Civil Engineering</p> <p>Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology</p>
--	--

Application Deadline:
21 August, 2019

Admission Test:
24 August, 2019

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

<p>MBA</p> <p>EMBA</p> <p>MDS</p> <p>MSS in Economics</p> <p>MA in English</p> <p>MA in ELT</p> <p>LLM</p>	<p>MS in CSE</p> <p>MS in Applied Statistics</p> <p>Master of Population, Reproductive Health, Gender & Development (MPRHGD)</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma in Population, Public Health, & Disaster Management (PPDM)</p>
--	---

Application Deadline:
23 August, 2019

MBA Admission Test:
24 August, 2019

For Online Admission Forms and Payment Facilities-
<http://admission.ewubd.edu> or Contact EWU Admission Office

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY
Aftabnagar, Dhaka-1212
Phone: 55046678, 09666775577, Ext. 234
Mobile: 01755587224

Child’s body recovered from Jamuna river

Student missing from Jhinai river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Fire service recovered the body of a five-year-old girl from Jamuna river in Bhuapur upazila yesterday.

Locals and firefighters said Ershad Ali of Sirajkandi village in Bhuapur along with his family went to the river on Wednesday to celebrate Eid.

His five-year-old daughter Rabeya fell into the river when Ershad was taking her photo while making her stand on a docked boat, they said.

Fire service divers tried to recover her body for two days (Wednesday and Thursday) but could not find her.

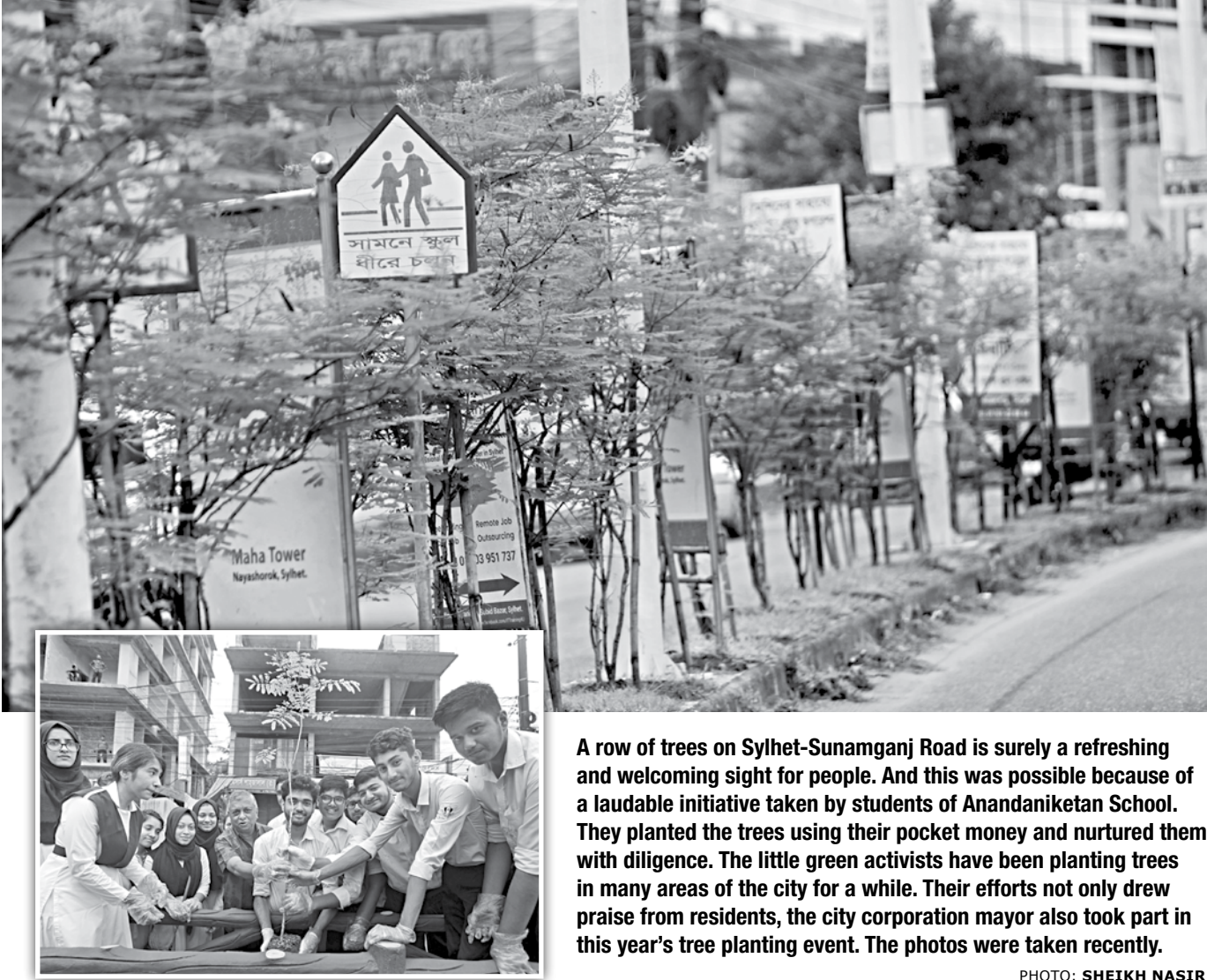
Rabeya’s body was later found floating in the same area around 9am yesterday.

In a separate incident, Tushar Miah, 18, a college student, from Paikpara village in Mirzapur upazila, went missing after going with his friends to take a bath in Jhinai river.

Due to the strong currents, they were submerged in the water, but Tushar’s friends managed to resurface.

Fire service divers launched a rescue operation that same day but could not find him, said Mohammad Abdur Razzak, senior station manager of Fire Service and Civil Defence in Tangail.

The operation continued yesterday but Tushar was not found till filing this report.



A row of trees on Sylhet-Sunamganj Road is surely a refreshing and welcoming sight for people. And this was possible because of a laudable initiative taken by students of Anandaniketan School. They planted the trees using their pocket money and nurtured them with diligence. The little green activists have been planting trees in many areas of the city for a while. Their efforts not only drew praise from residents, the city corporation mayor also took part in this year’s tree planting event. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

‘The most alone of poets’

FROM PAGE 3

and his origins. “I met reciters, and shot them reciting Das’ poetry in different locations based on the context of the poems,” said Sunairi.

When asked about his opinion on Jibanananda Das’ style and themes, Sunairi said he thinks Das found his language and style in his very early works. “The level of complexity in his work is a perfect fusion of western literary context and regional content,” he said.

Jibanananda Das’ nihilistic themes have been of interest to readers and critics for decades. Sunairi has a unique perspective on it: “Das’ obsession with death, for me, is a condition that creators often go through, because they strive to produce something that lives forever in the history of literature -- a world that’s complete in words. Though he based his experiences of nature during his time in Barishal, ultimately when he had to make sense in poetry that is a hermetic

world that exists only there. It resembles life but it is always fiction, because it’s a perfect fabrication of reality. When people strive so hard to create this art that lives on, often their own lives become less important. So, indulging in another world that’s not about living life, but living in words, is death, I consider. You are no longer living; you are trapped in the abstraction of your mind.”

Having made films in several countries and about different cultures in the past, Sunairi says he will take extra care to ensure that Bengali culture does not get diluted or commodified in the films, with help from local experts.

“However, I plan on showing Das’ life and work through a unique lens -- highlighting his lesser known poems, and the hidden sides of his life,” he said.

Sunairi’s films have been screened all around the world, from India and Vietnam to USA. The films on Jibanananda Das will tentatively be released next year.

Poet Shamsur Rahman’s

FROM PAGE 3

including four novels, 67 on poetry, a short story and six translations.

He also took part in various socio-cultural movements and played a vital role in the nation’s critical moments.

Rahman made his professional debut as a journalist of the daily Morning Sun in 1957. Later, he worked for Dainik Pakistan and Dainik Bangla, where he also served as its chief editor.

Major themes in his poetry and writings include humanism, relationships, romanticised rebellion of the youth, the emergence of and consequent events in Bangladesh, and opposition to religious fundamentalism.

He wrote most of his poems in free verse, often with the rhythm style known as “Poyaar” or “Akhshorbritto”. He also wrote poems in two other major patterns of Bengali rhythmic style, namely, “Matrabritto” and “Shwarobritto”.

Rahman also received a number of prestigious awards at home and abroad.

The eminent poet died at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) on this day in 2006 while undergoing treatment.

Bangabandhu’s killer Rashed Chowdhury to be brought back

Law Minister Anisul Huq says efforts are on



PHOTO: COLLECTED

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said that Rashed Chowdhury, a fugitive killer of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, will be brought back to the country from the USA in order to execute the Supreme Court verdict on him.

“Two of the six fugitive killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman are staying in the USA and Canada. The fugitive [Rashed Chowdhury] who is now in USA will be brought back to the country. Legal steps are on to bring the one in Canada back to the country as well. Initiatives are also on to trace the whereabouts of the four other fugitive killers,” he said.

The minister said this while addressing a programme organised to mark the National Mourning Day at Akhaura Railway Station premises in Brahmanbaria yesterday morning.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on November 19, 2009 upheld a High Court verdict, confirming capital punishment of 12 people, including the six, for killing Bangabandhu and most of his family members in a coup d’état on August 15, 1975.

Five of the convicts -- Syed Farooq Rahman, Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Bazlul Huda, AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed and Mohiuddin Ahmed -- were executed on January 27, 2010. Another killer, Aziz

Pasha, died in Zimbabwe in 2001.

Those who remain fugitives are: Khandaker Abdur Rashid, Shariful Haque Dalim, Noor Chowdhury, Rashed Chowdhury, Abdul Majed and Moslehuddin Khan.

The government had also made global appeals in bilateral, regional and international forums to track down the convicts. However, only two of the six could be traced -- Rashed Chowdhury in the US and Noor Chowdhury in Canada.

Yesterday, the law minister said, “No matter where they are hiding, they would be extradited to the country and would be brought to justice.”

“After the assassination of Bangabandhu and his family members in 1975, conspiracy was on to turn Bangladesh into a mini Pakistan,” he said, adding that the plot was almost implemented.

Anisul Huq also said the fate of the country began to change for the better after Awami League, under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, was voted to power in 1996.

Replying to a question from journalists about observing the birthday of imprisoned BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, the law minister said “her birthday changes often”.

Akhaura upazila unit of Awami League organised the programme to observe the 44th death anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.



Artisans giving finishing touches to clay pots (or ghats) to be used in Manasa Puja. Hindus worship the goddess of snakes seeking protection from snake bites in the months of Asar and Sraban, the rainy season, when movement of the animal increases. The photo was taken at Sihipasha village in Barishal’s Agailjhara upazila on Wednesday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

BNP accuses

FROM PAGE 3

and senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, among others, were present.

Khaleda has been in Old Dhaka Central Jail since her conviction in Zia Orphanage Trust graft case by a lower court on February 8, 2018. The BNP chief was shifted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University on April 1 for treatment and has been staying there since then.

Her party said she turned 75 on Thursday, though there is controversy over her actual date of birth.

Dhaka, Delhi

FROM PAGE 5

have strengthened security cooperation and are committed to eradicating terrorism. Bangladesh’s avowed policy is not to allow its soil for any terrorist activity against India or any other country.

It has received full cooperation from India too, the envoy added.

Medical waste dumped

FROM PAGE 5

ruins soil for miles and pathogens contaminate healthy drinking water supplies and fresh air, they added.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), disposal of untreated medical waste in landfills can lead to the contamination of drinking, surface, and ground waters if those landfills are not properly constructed.

A 7km canal -- Sapanial Khal -- is flowing around the Puranpara landfill. Starting from Kalibabur canal, the waterbody merges with Lakutia canal, which flows into Sandhya river.

Arefin Badol, deputy director at the Department of Environment, Barishal, said lack of an incineration to dispose of the clinical waste properly may cause a long-term serious health and environmental crisis for the six lakh residents.

Lincon Bayen, divisional coordinator of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), said a landfill should be set-up far from a residential area.

Echoing him, green activist Subhankar Chakrabarty demanded relocation of the landfill.

NGO WORKS IN LIMITED SCALE

Back in 2004, Prodiapan, along with 11 other NGOs, started collecting clinical waste from the city. It had also

installed a medical waste disposal plant at Puranpara. But the initiative stopped just after two years.

“Our plant got damaged in 2006,” said Mojibor Rahman, manager of Prodiapan. “Since then, we are the only ones collecting such waste,” he added.

He said their workers collect medical waste from private health care institutions and leave those at a designated corner of the landfill. “What else can we do? There is no proper way to dispose of the waste.”

“Our workers provide the service in exchange for Tk 500-5,000. In many cases, they find medical waste mixed with regular garbage in waste bins near healthcare facilities,” he said.

GOVT RESPONSIBILITY

Conservancy officer Dr Rabiul Islam said, “The landfill went beyond its capacity six years ago. And medical waste is mostly responsible for this.”

Now, garbage is spreading to nearby land. At least 50 decimal of land has been occupied with garbage, said locals.

“As a result, many had left the area,” said Masud Mia, who lives near the landfill. Around three years ago, Masud said, two locals Enayet Hossain and Kader Khan along with their families shifted to Alekanda and

Amanatganj areas as their land was getting filled with waste.

“Many will follow suit if this continues,” he said.

According to activists, it is the city corporation’s responsibility to dispose of clinical waste properly, but they continue to turn a blind to the hazardous situation. BCC should have installed a waste disposal plant a long time ago, they added.

Rabiul Islam said, “We were not able to do so due to a lack of fund. But we have already sent a proposal to the LGED ministry for a modern plant to be installed in Taltoly outside the city.”

Dr Bakir Hossain, director of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, the largest healthcare facility in Barishal, where 80 percent of waste are produced, said due to a lack of fund and manpower they failed to dispose of waste on their own. “We have to rely on BCC to remove those.”

BCC Mayor Serniabat Sadiq Abdullah, who took over charge in October last year, said Tk 50 crore fund is supposed to be allocated for the city’s modern waste management project this fiscal year.

“Under the project, an incinerator, among other related arrangements, will be ensured,” he added.



Construction materials occupy a large part of this footpath in Shyamoli, forcing pedestrians to walk on Mirpur Road. The sight of sidewalks being occupied by stacks of iron rods, parked cars, motorbikes and illegal structures has become all too common in the capital. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Dhaka, Delhi ties reached a new height

Bangladesh high commissioner says

Bss, New Delhi

The friendly ties between Bangladesh and India have grown stronger and reached a new height under the guidance of Prime Ministers Sheikh Hasina and Narendra Modi, Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Syed Muazzem Ali yesterday told officers taking part in the 59th NDC course at National Defence College in New Delhi.

The envoy spoke on “Framework of Bangladesh-India relations: Opportunities and Challenges”.

Besides, participants from India, the course has 25 overseas officers from Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, United States of America etc.

Muazzem said Bangladesh and India have focused on security, mutual trust, confidence-building and people-to-people connectivity.

He said Sheikh Hasina has restored mutual trust between the two neighbours and brought about a change in the mindset regarding the bilateral ties.

“There is now a greater recognition on both sides that the destinies of the two countries are intertwined and we must grow together,” the diplomat told officers at the prestigious course.

Muazzem said Bangladesh and India have steadily developed bilateral defence engagements in recent years.

The two countries signed five MoUs on defence cooperation during Sheikh Hasina’s India visit in 2017. The MoUs cover fields of general cooperation, training exchange and procurement of equipment, defence financing, medical cooperation and knowledge sharing between the top defence institutes of both countries.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

House help dies after falling from building

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A domestic worker died after falling from a building in the capital’s Dhanmondi area yesterday afternoon. Police suspected that she died while trying to flee from the home where she was working.

The deceased was identified as Riya Akter, 14 -- hailing from Bokshiganj upazila in Jamalpur.

Officer-in-charge of Dhanmondi Police Station Abdul Latif told The Daily Star that Riya started working at the Dhanmondi home on August 4. After two days, she declined to work there. Her mother, then, assured her that she would take her (Riya) home soon, and asked her to continue working there.

It seemed she tried to flee from the building, but fell from 11th floor, the OC said. Her parents came to the police station but did not lodge any complaint.

House owner Mominul Hasan was released after interrogation.

Woman crushed under train in Jashore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A woman was crushed under the wheels of a running train at Jashore Railway Station on Thursday night.

The deceased was identified as Reja Bagum, 60, wife of Tofajjal Hossain -- a resident of Navarin Bazar in Sharsa Upazila under Jashore district.

Station Master Saidul Islam said the victim fell under the train and it ran over her. She was severely injured and was immediately taken to Jashore General Hospital. The emergency doctor declared her dead.

Medical waste dumped irresponsibly

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Where there are sources that produce medical waste, there should also be means to dispose those of on a regular basis. Unfortunately, in a city like Barishal, there is no such mechanism for doing so, resulting in high risk of public health and environmental degradation.

Every day, at least five tonnes of clinical waste are being produced at four government hospitals, 40 clinics, 182 diagnostic centres, one blood bank and 9 upazila health complexes, according to officials.

Workers of Barishal City Corporation (BCC) and an NGO collect those from the government and private health care institutions respectively. After collection, they just dump the toxic waste on a six-acre landfill in the city’s Puranpara-Gauashar area.

During a recent visit, the collectors were seen piling up all sorts of medical waste in a corner of the landfill. There were also quite a few child ragpickers among them.

Not just used syringes, bandages, dressings, saline bags and needles, even amputated parts of human body, stool, urine, blood, expired medicine and various ingredients used for medical services, and disposable and non-disposable items were found there.

According to Barishal Civil Surgeon Monwar Hossain, this type of open dumping is extremely dangerous to human health.

Besides, over 100 families live around the landfill. Several children seen were walking on the piles, putting themselves at risk of injuries inflicted by hidden sharp objects.

This correspondent saw the workers leaving the spot after dumping the waste. Locals said this has been going on for years.

According to the civil surgeon, clinical waste has to be segregated into two parts -- infectious and hazardous; and those have to be crushed and burnt in an incinerator.

But there is no incinerator plant in Barishal to properly dispose of such hazardous materials.

In recent years, the city has experienced a dramatic increase in the amount of medical

waste being generated. It used to be 2.5 tonnes around 10 years ago, said Dipok Lal Mridha, former conservancy officer of BCC.

Dr Rabiul Islam, the incumbent officer, said, “With the increase in population, and consequently healthcare facilities, the amount is now almost double.”

THE HEALTH HAZARD

Doctors and health experts said dumping such medical waste out in the open could be hazardous for those exposed to it.



These waste may spread several contagious diseases, including hepatitis B and hepatitis C, tuberculosis, and malaria. Infected syringes and scalpels could cause fatal diseases like HIV/AIDS.

“Pathogens, substances mixed with chemicals, and pharmaceutical, pathological and genotoxic waste put people at risk of being infected with various viruses like hepatitis B and C, and even HIV,” said Shymal Krishna Mandal, assistant director of Directorate General of Health Services, Barishal.

Such open dumping may also spread contagious diseases, he further said.

Civil surgeon Monwar Hossain said people especially health workers and those living around the landfill are more vulnerable to those diseases.

IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENT

Dumping medical waste in the open is not only hazardous to health, but also harmful to the environment. Once the waste is shifted to a landfill, it becomes even more hazardous, said environmentalists.

Infectious blood tossed inside a landfill

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

A friend of the world

FROM PAGE 3

different activities of the United Nations.

Reading out a message of the Serbian foreign minister, issued on the occasion of National Mourning Day, Milan Milanovic highlighted the friendship between Bangabandhu and former President of Yugoslavia Marshal Josip Broz Tito.

Riyad H Mansour said 44 years after the assassination of Bangabandhu, his martyrdom anniversary was observed in the UN Headquarters, which is an outstanding initiative to pay homage to the legendary leader.

In his welcome address, Ambassador Momen highlighted the role and ideology of Bangabandhu in empowering people, protecting human rights, ensuring socioeconomic freedom and establishing democracy and peace.

Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN observed the National Mourning Day in the UN Headquarters for the first time with due solemnity.

Permanent representatives of different countries to the UN, diplomats, UN officials, rights activists and writers, among others, joined the programmes.

Earlier in the day, the national flag was hoisted at half-mast atop Bangladesh Permanent Mission. Milad and doa mahfils were also held, seeking eternal peace of the departed souls of Bangabandhu and his family members.



Barishal launch terminal is full again, but this time with people returning to Dhaka after Eid vacation. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Passengers face hassles at Barishal Launch Terminal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Heavy rush of passengers returning to the capital after Eid resulted in overcrowded launches and people missing their transport at Barishal Launch Terminal yesterday.

A total of 21 launches left for Dhaka yesterday, but many passengers missed their transport as some vessels were forced to leave the terminal earlier than the scheduled time.

Kaniz Sultana, a garment worker, said passengers board overcrowded launches as there is no alternative promising low fares and an easy journey, that too without affecting their work hours.

Anwarul Islam, a private company official, who came to the terminal from Mehendiganj upazila with his family, said he managed to acquire a small area for themselves on the deck of Parabat-11 by paying Tk 200 to a person who reserves space.

“I could not get a cabin so I am staying on the launch deck with my family. I chose this because journey by water is safer than road,” said Rezaul Islam, a businessman.

Ajmol Huda Mithu, deputy director (marine safety and river traffic) of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority at Barishal River Port,

said as per their presumptions, more than two lakh individuals arrived in Barishal via waterways to observe Eid this year.

“A large number of people left Barishal via waterways without any problem. A control room was opened at the terminal to monitor the situation and volunteers helped the authorities for safe boarding of women, children and elders,” he added.

Administrative officials, police and Rab were on-duty to tackle the situation.

Cabin passengers of the launches were requested to take seat from 3pm, 5-6 hours before the scheduled time as authorities requested overcrowded launches to leave the station 2-3 hours ahead of schedule.

Saidur Rahman Rintu, vice president of Barishal Launch Owners Association, acknowledging the facts, said authorities put a stated limit of 750-1300 passengers for each of the 16 triple-decker launches plying regularly or on Eid on Barisal-Dhaka route.

However, those plied yesterday carried 2,500-3,500 passengers, Rintu said. Authorities assured that the launches are capable of carrying that many passengers but the limit is there to provide ample space for everyone’s convenience.

Woman’s hanging body recovered from home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig

Hanging body of a housewife was recovered from port city’s Pahartali area yesterday noon.

The deceased was identified as Nazma Akhtar, 35, wife of Gias Uddin -- a resident of Nur Mohammed building of Pahartali’s Baro Quarter area.

The incident took place at the second floor of the building at around 2:40pm.

Assistant Sub-inspector (ASI) Alauddin Talukdar of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) Police Outpost said Nazma was rushed to CMCH emergency department after she was found in a hanging state in her bedroom at around 3:30pm.

On-duty doctors at the hospital declared her dead and sent the body to CMCH morgue for postmortem, said the ASI.

Mainur Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Pahartali Police Station, said police suspect that Nazma tried to die by suicide over domestic dispute. Police were questioning her husband, who is a workshop owner in Pahartali area, to know the details.

School meals can make a big difference

It will significantly incentivise going to school

We laud the government’s plan to provide daily meals for all 1.73 crore primary schools in order to increase attendance and reduce the number of dropouts. While enrolment of students has increased significantly over the years, keeping students in school has been a great challenge for the government. A nutritious meal in school could make all the difference for children of impoverished families. Many students come to school on an empty stomach which makes it difficult to concentrate on the lessons. This often leads to poor grades and children losing interest in studies—resulting in their dropping out. Last year attendance rate of primary students was 88 percent while the dropout rate was 20 percent.

The National Meal Policy 2019, if implemented successfully, has the potential to do wonders for the “education for all” goal. The draft proposal of the policy proposed hot meals five days a week and fortified biscuits on one day. Meals would include fortified rice, vegetable oil, locally grown vegetables and if possible, eggs. Locals and parents, especially mothers, will be involved in the programme which will, no doubt, make sure that it is run smoothly.

As in any large-scale programme, financing is obviously a challenge. Providing quality meals to all 1.73 crore schools will require kitchens in every school, along with cooks and other helpers as well as supervisors to monitor the quality of the food. The ministry is thinking of requesting businesses and banks to spend their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) funds on this programme. This seems like a good idea but should not be the primary source of financing. The ministry must be able to allocate adequate budgets to make sure the quality and quantity of food provided is consistent throughout all schools. School feeding programmes within the country and outside have proven to improve attendance and keep students in school by improving concentration and interest in lessons. We sincerely hope that the government will go ahead with this policy and implement it on an urgent basis. It is definitely the right step in the endeavour to increase children’s access to education.

Forests and wildlife in danger

World governments should come up with a new global plan

A major report, “Below the Canopy”, jointly written by the conservation group World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Zoological Society of London (ZSL), has brought to the fore some startling findings. The study found that the population of wildlife in the world’s forests has declined by more than half in just over four decades.

The study—the first-ever global assessment of forest biodiversity—sheds light on the utter destruction being inflicted on the world’s forests and wildlife by human beings. This is happening at a time when the threat of climate change is at its peak. And forests are integral to the containment of greenhouse gases among many other things (such as preservation of wildlife and biodiversity and maintaining food systems).

While the ground-breaking report states the dangers posed to the tropical forests of South America and Africa if large birds and primates were to disappear, we should pay heed to what is happening in our own backyard. Loss of species and deforestation in Bangladesh are taking place at an alarming rate—much of which is being caused by human activity. According to sources in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, around 1.6 lakh acres of forest land have been handed over to government agencies and establishments, or used for development projects. Official data shows that Bangladesh only has 17.62 percent of its landmass covered by forests, which only points to the fact that it is near-impossible to achieve the government aim to stop deforestation by 2020 and have 20 percent of the landmass covered by forests by 2030 with 70 percent tree density as per the SDGs.

The obvious damage being done to our forests stems from a lack of sincere political will towards conservation efforts. The projects being carried out in the Sundarbans—recently declared a “World Heritage in Danger” by Unesco—are the best-known examples that constitute an utter neglect towards wildlife and biodiversity. The report authors have called for the heads of state to come up with a new global agreement at the 75th UN General Assembly meeting next year, which we believe is timely as well as necessary. The world is in the midst of a climate emergency, and the Bangladesh government too should pay heed to conservationists and environmentalists and reverse the destructive steps being taken towards the environment.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Agartala Airport expanding into Bangladesh

India has proposed to upgrade and expand its Agartala Airport into Bangladeshi territory in Brahmanbaria. Although a detailed technical proposal is yet to be made, this should be dealt with, keeping in mind the political and security issues.

Although some European airports, like Geneva International Airport, operate over the boundaries of two or three countries and seem to function well, the situation is different for South Asian countries. The government should take this decision, given a proper proposal is made at all, with great care, weighing up the pros and cons of allowing India to use our land in such a way.

If it comes to pass, then many people may have to leave their homes near the boundary between the two countries, the repercussions of which may be hard to curtail. International relations experts have also warned how this may affect public sentiment.

Plus, the whole process of how it will be carried out should be formulated explicitly in order to avoid technical problems from both sides.

Fariha Maimuna, University of Dhaka

Redefining maleness in a man’s world

NAMIA AKHTAR

THE myriad stories of sexual assault that flood my Facebook feed are reflections of the sexism and misogyny that are deeply ingrained in our social fabric. These are inescapably omnipresent in every walk of life palpable in women’s invisibility. It seems that women do not exist, and even if they do, they are very few in number, sending a clear message that the public space is for men to occupy.

Every time I visit Dhaka, I wonder, “Why there are so few women on the streets?” Is it the invisibility of women that makes the street unsafe for us? Perhaps it does. In other cities of the world that I have visited, I found equal presence of men and women on the streets. I do not feel unsafe taking a walk even after midnight, when I am abroad. There is no one to gawk at me, no one to utter rude remarks.

At my new home in Europe, no one even bothers to stare at women in bikinis, let alone assault them sexually. However, in my home country, I feel unsafe—unsafe to walk alone, or take the public bus. I am afraid even if I am wearing a burqa, a sari or a salwar kameez—what if I get assaulted? Who will protect me?

The police refused to file Nusrat’s case saying it was a “no big deal”. Only after a nationwide campaign protesting her murder was the police officer sacked and her case brought to the court. Sadly, she found no justice when she was alive. In this country, rapists and sexual predators are usually allowed to go scot-free. Instead, I have seen victims being blamed for violating the rules of invisibility and for taking control over their bodies.

The victims of the 2015 *Pahela Baishakh* sexual assault, allegedly committed by some members of the ruling party’s student wing, were criticised for wearing makeup and saris and for taking part in the Baishakh celebrations, while the perpetrators were not brought to justice.

Tonu was accused of similar charges, for not covering her face; and Rupa, for travelling late at night. In all the cases, the perpetrators have been allowed to walk free, while the victims were blamed. There simply was no strong political will to punish the rapists. This is how the law of our land works—letting criminals walk free.

Neither the society nor the state is there to protect victims of rape or sexual assault. On the contrary, there have been incidents where the police have assaulted rape survivors. State institutions are essential for the implementation of laws. But according to a TIB report, our

law enforcement agencies are the most corrupt in the country. So, where do we seek help when the state and society turn their back on us?

In our gender-segregated society, rape and other forms of sexual assault are normalised as boys are introduced to women through commercial Bangla films and pornography. A majority of teenage boys grow up perceiving women through the lens of pornography, where women are treated as sex objects to satisfy the male fantasy. Among male circles, women are repeatedly referred to as *maal* (commodity).

Perhaps the root of this problem lies



in the way we educate our sons and daughters. We are preoccupied with the daughter-guarding mindset putting unprecedented restrictions on their mobility and sexuality from childhood. The female body is strictly regulated by the binary construction of appropriate and inappropriate attire. I have been to places where women are skimpily clothed, but no one bothers to scrutinise their bodies. However, in conservative Bangladesh, where a woman is dressed from top to bottom, she is frequently subjected to sexual harassment. The safety of bikini-clad women in European

beaches and the vulnerability of burqa-clad women in our country show that attire is not responsible for a woman being raped; it is the people’s mindset that is.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, sons are brought up with unlimited freedom of mobility. They are allowed to explore their mobility and sexuality without much restriction. Parents do not regulate their sons’ pornography watching habits or restrict them from using degrading words to describe women.

A friend of mine complained that her husband’s “friends” used to send him pornographic images until she blocked

silently suffered because their husbands had affairs—no protest ever took place for them. When a disabled woman is repeatedly raped for months and goes through the horror of abortion, it is considered unfortunate, but men do not take to the streets demanding punishment for the rapist. These are the double-standards within which our society operates.

Decency upholds an individual’s self-esteem, and “maleness” needs to be redefined as a man’s ability to accommodate modesty. We need to teach our boys that the strength of a man is reflected in his self-control, not in

them on Messenger. These men are all married with young children of their own, yet they continuously do it. What can we expect of such fathers? Can they teach their sons to respect women? In our society, men are allowed to smoke, stay out late, and party; their pre-marital or extramarital sexual relationships are overlooked by parents and society because “boys will be boys.”

A few months ago, outrage sparked on social media over the tragic suicide of a husband, committed after the discovery of his wife’s extramarital affair. There have been far more female victims who

assaulting women. In seventeenth-century London, public violence caused by men significantly dropped because of society’s changing perception towards violence and masculinity. Assaulting women is not a manifestation or proof of one’s manliness, it is an expression of transgressed behaviour. We need to teach our sons to be modest — something we have been preaching to our daughters for centuries; only then can real change happen.

Namia Akhtar is a postgraduate student studying political science at the South Asia Institute of Universität Heidelberg.
Email: namiaakhtar11@gmail.com

If It Ain’t Broke...



HUMOROUSLY YOURS
NAVEED MAHBUB

Aedes carry out their (supposedly) lethal, low altitude air strikes on all the couples of all the species on board that are known to mankind. Which begs the question, wasn’t there some equivalent of the TSA (Transportation Security Administration) that could have denied boarding rights to the red-tailed flying falcons? And mind it, it is no exaggeration to compare the red-tail to the red-cape of Superman, for the red “NS1” logo, surely visible under a magnifying glass, stands for “One Nefarious Superman”...

Yes, yes, a healthy couple of every

species must be on board, but does that mean every VARIANT too? Weren’t the Anopheles enough for posterity—to drive us insane with their nocturnal philharmonic orchestra at the symphony hall called the human earlobe? Weren’t they enough to maintain the ecological balance and keep the toads happy? We humans would gladly have traded dengue for malaria, as it came to America choosing between Clinton and Trump.

But no, they, the Aedis, made it on board, probably sailing first class into posterity. I can well imagine how they drove every other species on board up the wall, or should I say, the railings, as they played history’s first day and night match—Aedes during the day, Anopheles at night. And no, no clapping! That could squat the maestros—the Anopheles, the Culex and especially the Aedes must be allowed to continue with their all you can suck buffet. For these couples are on a triple date, this is their honeymoon on the Carnival Cruise and no one, not even the mightiest, or the strongest, or the tallest, or

the fiercest, are allowed to touch them with a 10-foot pole of a mosquito zapper.

After the deluge, the Ark makes landfall. The mosquito lives through time to become our blood relative, literally speaking. For they have our blood in them, and our blood has our formalin. That’s not to say that to the mosquitos, the spray is totally bull, in fact, to them, it is actually *Red Bull*.

So, like every year, the Aedes storm troopers are back—better, stronger, faster. In comparison, Count Dracula pales into insignificance. Amidst all the negatives around us, they present us with the only thing that is positive—NS1.

But we have taken measures, albeit reactively. After all, if it ain’t broke, why fix it? It’s too much effort to be proactive, right?

So, aside from the blitzkrieg of sprays, combatant mosquitos are being brought in from the UK, perhaps as part of Brexit, which don’t bite, but sure can give love bites as they are expected to be enamoured with the local female

Aedis (sorry local Aedis studs, you lose out to your fair and handsome, Anglo-Saxon, expat counterparts), then have khaki coloured kids. And guess what, the progeny will not carry the dengue virus.

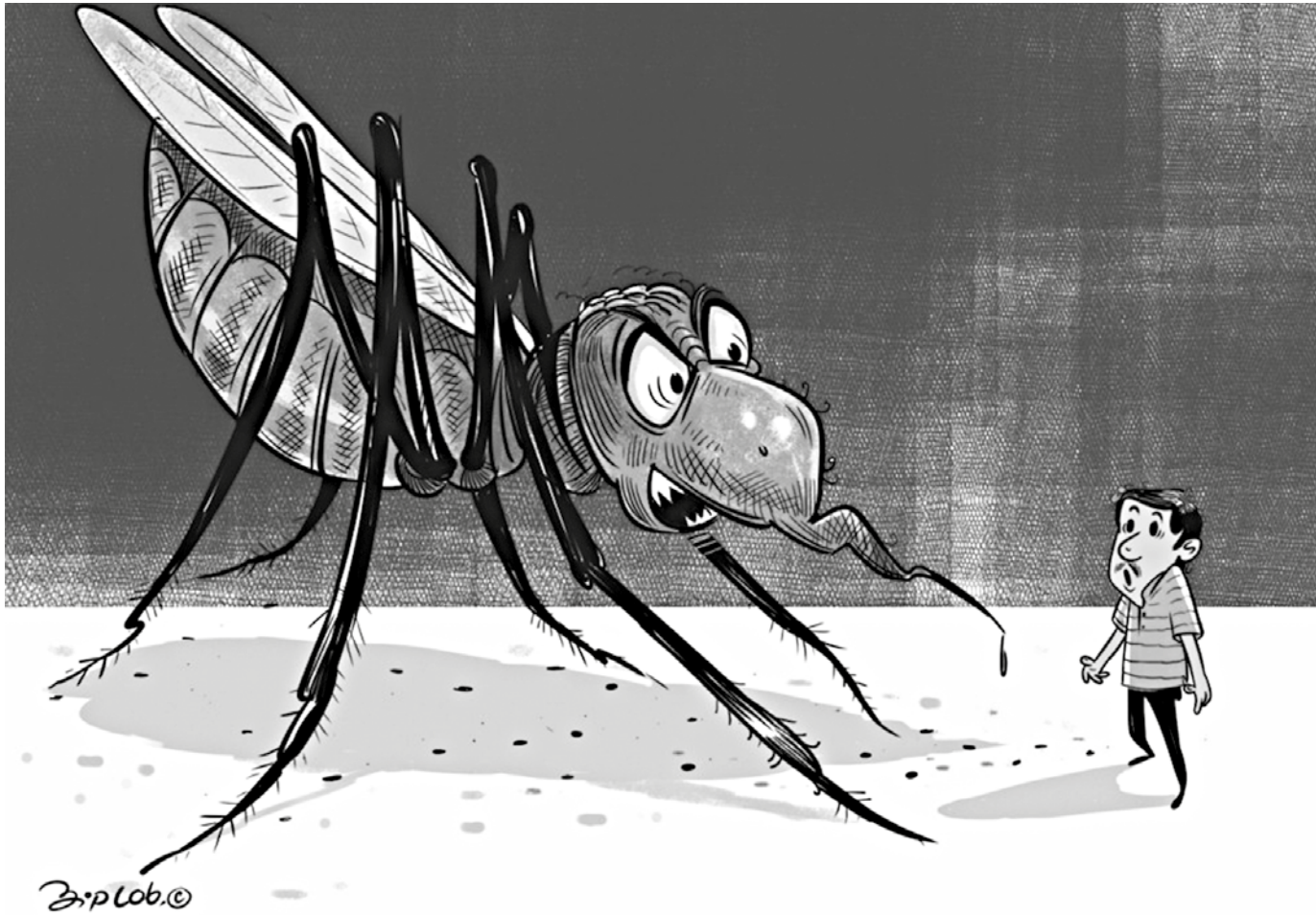
Yay! But that is the grand scheme. It’s like we are building luxury apartments in Baridhara (which, by the way, apparently has the largest concentration of Aedes larvae), asking them to be occupied by people for free and not only that, providing them around the clock room service, again, gratis, and then, all of a sudden, we want them out of there.

That is the hospitality we have accorded to the Aedes—providing them with a plethora of stagnant water to breed in. Perhaps we can check under our refrigerators for the “likes” accorded by the Aedes on to the accumulated condensates as often as we check the “likes” on our Facebook statuses. Perhaps we can take care to ensure the Baldha Gardens we are building on our balconies and rooftops do not end up becoming Hatirjheel. Perhaps we can keep an eye on the water reservoir that we are using to build 10 storied apartments, hoping that the Aedes won’t fly that high up (think again!). Let’s take an effort beyond just washing our cars and then drying up our compounds, only to have the roads inherit the stagnant water. Let’s take a peek at our flower vases...There is SO MUCH we, as individuals, can do to not create the romantic bedrooms for the Aedes.

But for now, they are here. So, let’s now get *Odomos*, if we can afford it, that is. For it is now a rare commodity fit to be displayed only in glass showcases under lock and key, under the scrutiny of CCTV cameras, sold as “bhoris”, weighed on the gold scale, smuggled in through Dhaka Airport by way of human orifices, transported in G4S armoured vehicles, escorted by armed guards...The *Odomos* seller is in a blood sucking contest with the Aedes. There is one difference between them though, the Aedis sucks blood only during the daytime.

Anyway, we play the game of Russian Roulette, hoping against hope that we are not on the lunch menu of the Aedes. Meanwhile, go have some green papaya, supposedly it’s good for your platelet count. As to what you want to increase in your blood stream, the choice is yours—platelet or formalin...

Naveed Mahbub is a former engineer at Ford & Qualcomm USA, the former CEO of IBM & Nokia Networks Bangladesh turned comedian (by choice), the host of ATN Bangla’s *The Naveed Mahbub Show* and the founder of *Naveed’s Comedy Club*.
Email: Naveed@NaveedMahbub.com



Toni Morrison and Trump

Deafening silence follows death of giant



THE passing away of Toni Morrison shook up America, well as it should. Prolific, ferociously erudite and astonishingly widely read, it is fair to say that for many years she was the unofficial but undisputed queen of American letters. Her long, distinguished and productive career is strewn with pretty much every major award—the Nobel Prize, the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Critics’ Circle Award, a presidential recognition (conferred by the previous occupant of the White House, obviously).

As America continues to strive for greater racial fairness, most will concede that it is still a work in progress. But the passing of Toni Morrison is one of those moments when we can take some solace. The massive outpouring of grief and unreserved affection and respect accorded to this literary colossus transcended racial boundaries and made me hopeful about the essential inclusive humanity that animates most decent Americans. God knows it’s not easy to be hopeful in these troubled times.

There was one glaring exception. That would be our tweeter-in-chief, the current resident in the White House, who loves to greet the crack of dawn with meanspirited 140-character spurts of pure venom in reaction to the latest perceived slight. President Donald J Trump was conspicuously, if unsurprisingly, silent.

Somehow the passing of arguably one of America’s greatest living writers was not worthy of his attention. There are two issues here: one broad, another more personal. The broader socio-cultural question is whether the demise of literary icons has lost some of its profound significance of yesteryear. The entire nation was in mourning when Charles Dickens died in 1870, and he was buried with demonstration of grief and homage did not follow Morrison’s death, her death was nonetheless extensively and reverently reported in the press.

On a personal level, my strong hunch is even if his aides suggested a few words of condolence, Trump would have refused to have any truck with it. Toni Morrison had done something unforgivable in Trump’s eyes—she had been critical of him. It also may not be



Author Toni Morrison. national honours (albeit against his wishes) in Westminster Abbey. An estimated two million people joined the funeral procession in Paris after Victor Hugo passed away in 1885, and his remains were subsequently interred in the crypts of the Arc de Triomphe. While such massive public

entirely coincidental that she happened to be African American—a community the president has shown repeated signs of not being particularly fond of, to put it mildly. Now, there are instances of past Trump critics who have been rehabilitated—his former aide Steven Bannon and US Senator Ted Cruz come

to mind. But to get back into Trump’s good books you have to grovel, an option, alas, no longer available to Morrison.

What a contrast with President George W Bush. Now Bush would hardly be confused with Santa Claus, particularly given his odious and illegal war with Iraq on false pretences. But he had his moments of humanity, and one of the noblest was when he conduced the death of the bitingly witty humourist and columnist Molly Ivins, who had mercilessly taunted him in her columns. She called him “Shrub”, arguing he wasn’t smart enough to be called “Bush”. It surely wasn’t much fun being the butt of Ivins’ jokes, but when she died, he had the enormous grace to put rancour aside. “I respected her convictions, her passionate belief in the power of words. She fought her illness with that same passion. Her quick wit and commitment will be missed,” Bush said in a statement.

How times have changed. Trump’s silence brought back memories of the days following the death of Shamsur Rahman, the unofficial poet laureate of Bangladesh. The BNP was in power at that time, and erstwhile Prime Minister Khaleda Zia did not exactly cover herself with glory. She had followed Trump’s route. But Bangladeshis responded with a massive outpouring of grief—the number of people who turned up was possibly one of the greatest in living memory.

What Trump and Khaleda fail to realise is that they are in no position to disrespect literary titans. Their conduct reminds me of a story of a visitor to a distinguished art museum which had a rare collection of past masters. He perused the art and shrugged. A curious guard asked him about his experience.

He said he wasn’t terribly impressed with what he saw. In his view, the art didn’t amount to much.

“Ah, sir, that’s where you are mistaken,” the custodian said. “I think you have got it backwards. Those works of art have stood the test of time and are universally recognised as great art. You don’t get to judge them. They judge you. It is you whose ability to appreciate art is judged depending on how you react.”

Trump and Khaleda, too, are hardly in a position to assail the stature of Morrison and Rahman. Their conduct, however, speaks volumes about them. It’s hard to know if they even care.

We live in particularly toxic political times when sheer political animus can rob people of the humanity and generosity of spirit so essential to harmonious civic life. It would appear that there’s no price to be paid for hatred in today’s polarised politics, and no particular gain to be made by being honourable and kind.

I worry about another hero of mine, Amartya Sen, the Nobel laureate economist, the quintessential gentleman whose commitment to reason, tempered thought and argument make him seem so charmingly old-world.

Yet he has been treated horribly by the current Indian government, for the simple reason that he has refused to back off from telling harsh truths about the breakdown of civility and tolerance in his country.

When he is gone, will we have to suffer through another egregious bout of studied silence from a head of state? I shudder to think about that day.

.....

Ashfaque Swapan is a contributing editor for Silhouette, a monthly periodical for South Asians in the United States.

The invisible side of freelancing

JINAT JAHAN KHAN

TO many of us, freelancing is the ideal income opportunity: with no boss to answer to and zero peer pressure, freelancing feels like just the right choice. One can work from the comfort of their home and focus on their business. But is it that simple? Perhaps not.

If you think that having your own home as your workplace is an advantage, then you are wrong. For one, too many distractions in the workplace—the kinds we usually come across at home—will ultimately affect the pace of your work.

While working from home, one might be prone to seeking more breaks: to watch a movie, listen to music, or have a chat with family or friends. As a result, a task that can be completed within an hour may take longer to finish, resulting in the decline of one’s productivity and efficiency.

Many people choose freelancing as their main source of income so that they can spend quality time with their family or can have ample amount of time for themselves. However, the freedom that comes with freelancing may have negative impact on a person’s work.

Let me explain: for a regular officegoer, there is a trade-off between income and leisure. It depends on one’s priority and what holds more importance in their life. However, this doesn’t mean that these two are mutually exclusive. One can enjoy both through proper work-life balance.

But the problem arises when a person is reluctant or unable to find the right balance. People often procrastinate and this takes a toll on the quality of their free time. The extra burden or tension a person faces as a result of not doing their job on time

takes away from the joy, which they could have derived from leisure.

In short, freelancing might render a person incapable of keeping their personal and work life separate. At this point, however, it should be added that not all freelancers face such existential dilemmas. Nonetheless, many experience this, even if for a short period of time.

Without a supervisor or boss to oversee a person’s work, one can lose track of their work, due to a lack of feedback and monitoring. Sometimes emotional breakdown or monotonous feelings can take away from a person’s enthusiasm to work and even make them slow. In such situations, appreciation, casual suggestions or, at times, even criticism can boost an individual’s morale. However, freelancers don’t have colleagues or bosses around for such feedback. This can lead to loss of efficiency and thus income.

In traditional employment formats, poor performance doesn’t immediately affect an employee’s income; an employee still receives remuneration with a word of caution from the employer. On the other hand, freelancers are always exposed to the possibility of financial loss due to their lack of efficiency. Thus, freelancers almost always live with financial insecurities.

Not that such losses occur every day, but this always remains a possibility, since one’s income is dependent on the speed of their work and their efficiency. And even though a person might be efficient and committed to their work, at times luck runs out leading to unwarranted financial losses.

One might question the logic of having to go to a workplace every morning, when one can simply

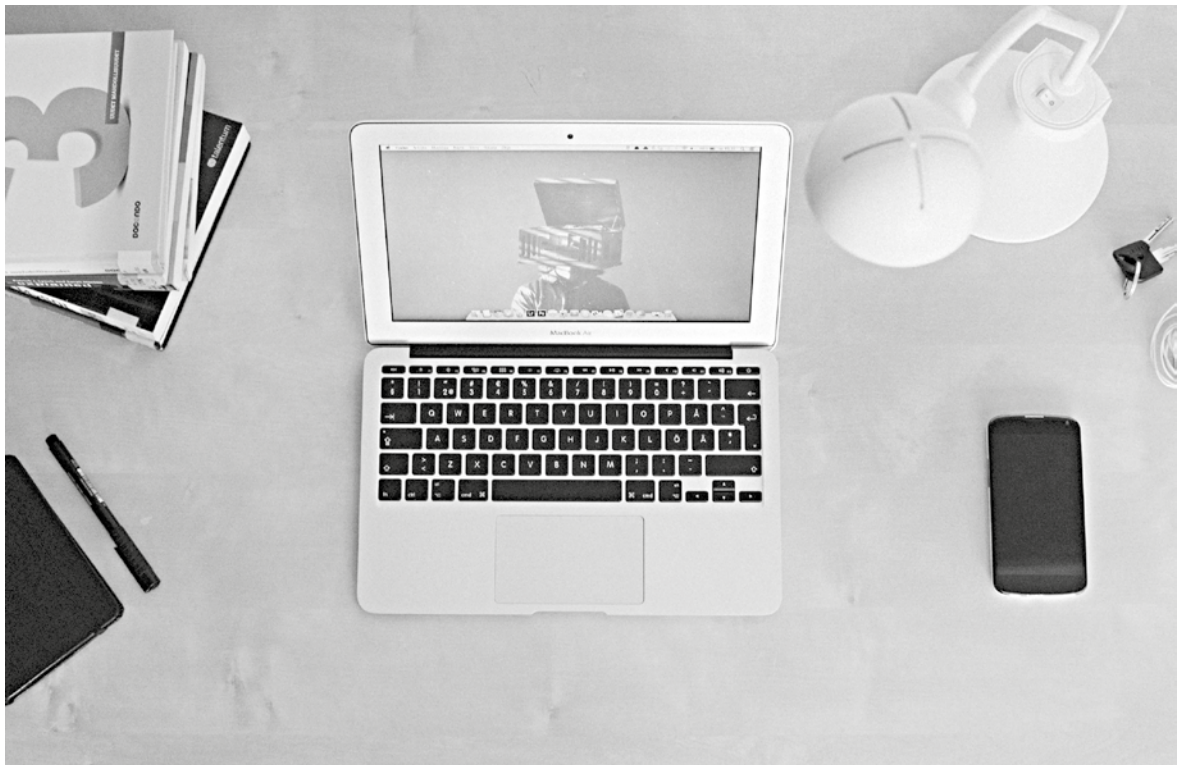
work from home, thanks to the technological advancements that have made our lives simpler. These days, an individual can work from wherever they want and whenever they want. So, what is the point of going to office?

One answer is the importance of supervision and reinforcement which have already been discussed above. Healthy competition, financial rewards and promotions are some of the benefits of working in a professional environment. Networking and interpersonal interactions are also some of the positives of traditional employment.

Always staying within the confines of one’s home can cause loneliness and depression. Humans are meant to coexist in a social setting and interact with each other, and a solitary life inside the house can have a negative impact as people have an emotional need to interact with other humans.

Criticism and competition are not necessarily bad, especially if we can take them constructively and treat them as opportunities to improve our

Humans are meant to coexist in a social setting and interact with each other, and a solitary life inside the house can have a negative impact as people have an emotional need to interact with other humans.



SOURCE: HACKERNOON.COM

performance and grow. The desire to excel, to exceed expectations, will help us explore our potentials and keep us busy, and leave no room in our lives for negative thoughts, loneliness and depression.

Traditional employees use their vacations and weekends to spend quality time with their families and friends; freelancers, on the other hand, are often deprived of this since they do not always have the luxury of well-defined holidays or weekends.

Freelancers also sometimes face problems establishing trust with their clients: often clients find it difficult to rely on unknown freelancers to get their job done. A freelancer needs to work hard in order to gain the confidence

of a client. This results in maximised output and positive outcomes for both parties.

Freelancing, as discussed in this article, has its pros and cons. For one, it is an important source of income for our economy and it can greatly help in alleviating unemployment. However, people often tend to get drawn away by the prospect of working from home, and fail to reap the benefits of this non-traditional employment format. An individual must understand that they need to find the right work-life balance even while working as a freelancer; otherwise growth and sustainability will become difficult.

.....

Jinat Jahan Khan is a student at the Department of Economics at Dhaka University.

ON THIS DAY
IN HISTORY

AUGUST 17, 1903
JOSEPH PULITZER DONATES TWO MILLION DOLLARS TO COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY WHICH STARTS THE PULITZER PRIZES IN HIS NAME

The newspaper publisher gave money in his will to the university to launch a journalism school and establish the prize, an award given to those who excel in journalism, literature, and music

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

29 Fly, e.g.

32 Spots

33 Northern grazer

34 That lass

35 Batter’s goal

36 Capp and Capone

37 Dupe

38 Molecule’s makeup

40 Came to

42 Eel variety

43 Insertion sign

44 Concert site

45 Loses

DOWN

22 Packing a punch

24 To be, to Balzac

25 Cannabis extract

27 Sugar source

1 Twin of myth

6 Crooked

11 Like lambs

12 Judi of “Iris”

13 Man of Madrid

14 French academy

15 Conclude

16 Travel aid

18 Pale

19 Battleship

20 Neighbor of Mich.

21 [Not my spelling]

26 Squids’ squirts

27 Grand -- (Atlantic island)

28 Paper worker

30 Failed in the clutch

31 Principles

33 Cake course

39 Chess piece

41 Baby’s wail

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

YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

H	O	O	P	S		H	O	M	E	R
I	N	L	A	W		A	B	O	V	E
D	O	D	G	E		M	O	P	E	D
		F	E	E	D	M	E			
B	E	L	T	O	Y		N	A	T	
A	D	A	G	I	O		D	A	R	E
S	U	M	M	E	R	G	A	M	E	S
I	C	E	S		M	O	M	E	N	T
L	E	S		J	E	T		N	A	Y
		S	E	N	O	R	A			
P	E	T	E	R		W	O	M	A	N
B	L	A	N	K		A	D	E	L	E
S	I	X	T	Y		R	E	S	E	T

BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker

BABY BLUES

by Kirkman & Scott

WHAT'S ON
RIBUTE TO MAD
Exhibition
Title: Tribute to Mad Cartoon
Venue: Dink Gallery, Dhamondi
13A (New)
Date: August 23 – 25
Time: 3 pm – 8 pm

Exhibition
Title: Seven
Venue: Dink Gallery, Dhamondi
Date: August 18 – 20
Time: 3 pm – 9 pm

Photography & Poetry Exhibition
Title: ProjectDek: Revolutionary
Photography And Poetry Exhibition
Venue: DMK Centre, Dhamondi
Date: August 26 – 28
Time: 10 am – 7 pm

Rock Concert
Title: Legacy of Rock N Roll
Venue: ICCR, Hall 04 (Nabotari),
Dashedindara
Date: September 13
Time: 3 pm – 10 pm
Hotline: +8801707975206

Art Exhibition
Title: Mahurama solo art exhibition by
Shamset Tabereje
Venue: Dink Gallery, Lalmita
Date: July 27 – August 22 (except
Mondays)
Time: 5 pm – 9 pm



(From left) Paintings by Murtaja Baseer and Monirul Islam, respectively.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

Murtaja Baseer and Monirul Islam!

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Today marks the 88th birthday of the multifarious genius Murtaja Baseer, whose six-decade career takes up a unique place in the modern art history of Bangladesh. But what makes this prolific artist stand out is his continuous attempt to learn, grow and evolve. The artist still thinks that he could not do what he wanted to do in the realm of art. "I am still a bud yet to bloom," says Murtaja Baseer, the youngest son of eminent scholar Dr Muhammad Shahidullah.

"Art is like my everyday prayer; a lifelong perseverance. Creating a painting is like giving birth to a child. When I am not at work, I contemplate. The moods of my paintings are diverse as I go through a myriad of feelings and experiences," adds the Shadhinata Padak and Ekushey Padak winner.

The Wings and Epitaph for the Martyrs are two of his noteworthy series, articulating truth, beauty, homage, romanticism and spirituality. Many are perhaps not familiar with Baseer's other identities as a poet, short story writer, novelist, researcher, numismatist and filmmaker.



(From left) Monirul Islam and Murtaja Baseer

PHOTO: COURTESY

An interesting aspect of Baseer's work is his self-portraits. He draws himself at least once in a year. "You know what I had learnt from my life? No one is your true friend. Your inner self is the only entity you can truly rely on and trust your deepest secrets with. When I feel lonely, I stand in front of the mirror and ask who I am. The answer lies in the drawings of my self-portraits," concludes the artist.

Today also marks the 77th

birthday of internationally renowned Bangladeshi artist, Monirul Islam. The Ekushey Padak winner believes that art, aesthetics and emotion are basic things in life. "Life is a canvas and it is the artists who portray the various aspects and elements into it. Understanding art is a process that incorporates many things. It doesn't happen all of a sudden in someone," says the Spain and Bangladesh based artist Monirul Islam, who works on diverse media including

print, watercolour, acrylic, oil and others.

Subtle lines with a harmonious colour balance between space and composition is an important aspect in Monir's works. The artist fondly uses minute doodles, lyrical lines, dots, tiny motifs and symbols. Applying meticulous colours in thin layers and reducing the texture of the paint to its most minimal expression. Monirul Islam established an individual abstract language in the early '70s.

"My artistic fantasies play with many unfinished works scattered in my studio. They seem to grow with my dreams spreading their wings. I dream of depicting what I cherish; but I don't know whether I'll make it or not. A painting never ends. This unquenchable thirst is a prerequisite for any artist to move forward," says Monirul Islam. "Art itself is much more powerful than the artist. Art, culture, literature and education are necessary to nourish the soul. The art of talking, cooking, eating, dressing, behaving and above all, art for teasing sensuousness encircles our life," concludes the artist.

The Daily Star wishes the two art maestros many happy returns of the day.



PHOTO: STAR

A judge of Bangladesh Supreme Court, Md Abu Tariq, the Principal of Sheahed Syed Nazrul Islam College, Dr AKM Abdur Rafiq, the Children Affairs Officer of Mymensingh Shishu Academy, Md Mehdi Zaman, and a trainer of Zainul Shishu Charupath, Badal Chakraborty, were present at the event. Later, the guests distributed prizes among 16 winners of the art competition.

Different socio-cultural and educational institutions, including Mymensingh Zila Shilpakala Academy and Mymensingh Shishu Academy also organised various programmes, such as painting competitions, rallies and discussion meetings, to observe the occasion.

Mymensingh District Administration and Police also organised cultural competitions for children in different parts of the district.

Alokchitra Shilpi Sangsad organised a photography exhibition on the Liberation War. Around 150 photographs were displayed at the exhibition.

The State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid Babu, Mymensingh Divisional Commissioner Khondoker Mostafizur Rahman, Deputy Inspector General of Police (Mymensingh Range), Nibash Chandra Majhi, Deputy Commissioner, Md Mizanur Rahman, visited the exhibition.

The children's film, *Kalo Megher Bhela*, directed by Mrittika Goon, will be premiered on Channel i at 10:15 am.

Written by renowned poet Nirmalendu Goon, the film was made with the help of a government grant. This is Mrittika Goon's first directorial venture, and features Runa Khan and child artiste Apon as the central characters.

The children's film, *Kalo Megher Bhela*, directed by Mrittika Goon, will be premiered on Channel i at 10:15 am.

Written by renowned poet Nirmalendu Goon, the film was made with the help of a government grant. This is Mrittika Goon's first directorial venture, and features Runa Khan and child artiste Apon as the central characters.



#metoo



Bongsho Morjada



Kalo Megher Bhela

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Exciting Eid ul Adha specials on television

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

With multiple channels airing exciting programmes throughout the festive season of Eid ul Adha, *The Daily Star* highlights on a compilation of some of the most delightful upcoming shows on TV. Similar to a feature that was published previously, this too, follows up on some of the best programmes that our channels have to offer to the audience today.

The children's film, *Kalo Megher Bhela*, directed by Mrittika Goon, will be premiered on Channel i at 10:15 am. Written by renowned poet Nirmalendu Goon, the film was made with the help of a government grant. This is Mrittika Goon's first directorial venture, and features Runa Khan and child artiste Apon as the central characters.



Nilmaya

Streaming platforms redefining the entertainment industry

There was a time when audio-visual entertainment were an integral part of our daily lives, due to their fixed airing times. Be it films, sports or TV shows, we always found the time to watch television, no matter how busy our days were, and we even waited for repeat telecasts of our favourite shows. Millennials may never understand the revolution that Sony Walkman brought in the 80s, only because of the mobility of entertainment. People would not mind carrying a brick-sized device only to achieve mobility over entertainment. With the rapid development in high-speed internet connectivity and the inception of smartphones, tabs, laptops and other gadgets, people started winning over the static nature of visual entertainment.

In the last decade, we have seen a paradigm shift in the entertainment industry because now we can watch visual materials 'on the go' from any of our digital devices, with a decent internet connection.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, it was anticipated that the entertainment business will evolve for the better. A streaming service like Netflix has changed the way of consuming films and TV shows. Before Netflix, we rushed to the cinemas to catch the latest films. Now, we do not feel the need to watch films in cinemas, as Netflix has intervened our habits of watching films.

Streaming platforms have added value to the entertainment industry, focusing on three aspects: original shows, mobility of the viewing experience and a wide range of products. They are becoming the largest chain of producers globally. Mobility is one of the key values that streaming services have added to the world of visual entertainment and worldwide online content consumption has gained huge momentum over the past few years.

Even in Bangladesh, online platforms have shown commendable growth. Streaming services like Hoichoi, iflix, Bioscope and ZEE5 have gained acceptance and a huge following, alongside with the global platforms. Since these platforms



are subscription-based, payment methods have been an issue due to the low penetration rate in the online transaction. Bearing that in mind,

most streaming services offer easy subscription and payment methods nowadays. Hoichoi has incorporated debit and credit cards, local mobile

wallets as well as offline subscription cards that are available Meena Bazar and Gadget & Gear outlets in Dhaka.

Apart from original shows, the platform has a huge collection of third-party content for a wide range of subscribers. For instance, Hoichoi has an array of classics of Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Sen, Uttam Kumar, Suchitra Sen, Soumitra Chatterjee and many others.

Recently, Hoichoi kicked off its operations in Bangladesh. The organisation has started partnering up with local creative minds to produce content. National award-winning director Amaliah Reza Chowdhury's web series, *Dhaka Metro*, director duo Tanim Noor and Krishnendu Chattopadhyay's web series, *Money Honey*, are both huge hits on Hoichoi.

Streaming platforms have transformed the entertainment industry by offering the liberty of creativity. Unlike traditional channels, directors who work on projects for streaming services have more control over their projects and actors have the opportunities to be more dynamic with their roles. Streaming platforms have opened up a creative ocean, providing artists with the appropriate tools to explore uncharted territories of entertainment, with the power of digital media.

SOURCE: FORTHUGHT PR

Towfique Ahmed

An ode to Bangla rap

MINAM HAQ

Long before he garnered popularity as one of the pioneers of Bangla rap, Towfique Ahmed was introduced to the art of poetry and music by his father from a very young age. Influenced by the tutelage of poetry along with tabla classes, and later drums, he developed an understanding between rhyme and rhythm. Little did he know, that his childhood lessons and his cadet college grooming, would one day strengthen his foothold in a genre that far differed from what he was learning.

Having featured as a guest artist in two different albums while residing in the UK, Towfique finally released his first self-titled album *Rajotto* along with his band mate Faisal Roddyin2010, under the banner of Ektaar Music. Songs like *Bidrohi* and *Protishrutu* among others, resonated well with the fans. Often, his meaningful and patriotic lyrics possessed a quality that served as a voice for the voiceless. And that in turn, helped Towfique carve his space in the music industry. To this day, he tends to cultivate that philosophy. Apart from the harsh realities of life that Rajotto's rap lyrics reflect upon, they also nurture a melodious side, evident by the variation in their music.

His next venture was with popular music director Adit. *Khepa Gaan* became an instant hit upon its release. Following the success of *Khepa Gaan*, the duo paired up again along with rapper ABD for a track called 52, based on the Language Movement of Bangladesh. Needless to say, it too was a favourite amongst listeners.

"Faisal bhai and I released our second album in 2014, titled *Dasheta* which was well-received by the fans," informs Towfique. "Since then, I have been blessed to have worked on a handful of other projects including solos, film songs, and theme songs for BPL, *Prothom Alo* and various other renowned brands."

Having studied law in the UK, Towfique is currently a lecturer at American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB), teaching law. He also manages to practice law. "My main focus is to work on the issues regarding artist management and copy right laws, as I feel that these issues need addressing."

Three upcoming singles are currently underway from the band Rajotto. Towfique is also planning to work extensively on his solos in the near future.



PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MOHESHD

National Museum hosts seminar on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman



PHOTO: COURTESY

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The Bangladesh National Museum arranged a seminar based on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, on the occasion of the Father of the Nation's 44th death anniversary. Mohammed Abdul Majid, Secretary, Bangladesh National Museum delivered the welcoming address. Journalist Pranab Saha was the keynote speaker. Educationalist and former Vice-Chancellor of University of Dhaka, AAMS Arefin Siddique and noted journalist Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul were among the discussants. Dr Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal, Acting Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, was the chief guest. Md Reaz Ahmed, Director General, Bangladesh National Museum, presided over the programme.

Daily Star Books on HOME DELIVERY SERVICE. To place your order over the phone, please call 8815941 or 01714161001 (from 9am to 6pm, except on Fridays).

Bookstores where our titles are available:

Aziz Super Market, Shahbag: Prothoma (9664825), Pathak Samabesh (01713-034440), Bidita (01911-166475)
Gulshan: Words n pages (989-0832), Road no. 07; **Dhamondi:** Gyankosh, Road no. 4 (862-3251); Book View (01711-520662), New Market; Omni Books, Road no. 27 (812-6433); **Baily Road:** Sagor Publishers (01716-544444); **Banani:** Aranya Crafts Ltd (988-2542); **Old Airport:** Book Worm (912-0387); **Airport:** Omni Books (890-1808); **Farmgate:** The Daily Star office (01711837719/812-4944); **Chittagong:** Batighor (01713-304344) and Prothoma (01711-649422), Jamal Khan Road.

Modi's fascist tactics will fail miserably

Says Pak PM Khan, talks with Trump

AFP, Dawn

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan yesterday said that the Indian government's "fascist tactics" in occupied Kashmir "to smother the Kashmiri liberation struggle will fail miserably".

The premier, who has been tweeting regularly in support of Kashmiris after the Indian government stripped the people of occupied Kashmir of their autonomy, said: "The fascist, Hindu supremacist [Narendra] Modi government should know that while armies, militants and terrorists can be defeated by superior forces, history tells us that when a nation unites in a freedom struggle and does not fear death, no force can stop it from achieving its goal."

"That is why the Hindutva exclusivist creed of the Modi-led government with its fascist tactics in loK will fail



miserably in its attempt to smother the Kashmiri liberation struggle," declared the premier in a second tweet.

Yesterday, Imran Khan spoke to US President Donald Trump about his concerns over the situation in disputed Kashmir region, Islamabad's foreign minister said, ahead of a UN Security Council meeting to discuss the issue.

The call comes a day after at least five people were killed in cross-border fire between India and Pakistan, amid heightened tensions between the nuclear-armed rivals since New Delhi controversially ended the autonomous status of the portion of Kashmir it administers.



PHOTO: AFP

Kashmiris hold placards as they shout slogans at a protest after Friday prayers against the Indian government's decision to scrap the special constitutional status for Kashmir, in Srinagar, yesterday. Inset, A Kashmiri woman shows her hands with messages at a protest after Friday prayers.



'NO FIRST USE' OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

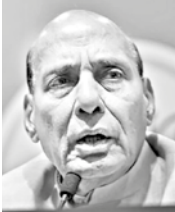
India may change policy

Says Rajnath Singh as tension with Pakistan soars

NDTV ONLINE

Indian Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh yesterday underscored that India reserves the right to change its policy of 'No First Use', which has been the cornerstone of India's nuclear weapons policy for decades. The government firmly stands by its 'No First Use' policy but "what happens in future will depend on the circumstances," the minister said at Pokhran in Rajasthan, the site of two nuclear tests by India.

"Pokhran is the area which witnessed Atalji (former prime minister Atal Bihar Vajpayee's) firm resolve to make India a nuclear power and yet remain firmly committed to the doctrine of 'No First Use'. It is true that till now, India has strictly adhered to the 'No First Use' policy. What happens in future depends on the circumstances," Rajnath Singh told reporters in Pokhran, where he attended the closing ceremony of the army scout master competition in Pokhran.



Rajnath Singh made the comment as he paid tribute to Vajpayee on his first death anniversary at Pokhran where India held nuclear tests in 1974 (under the Indira Gandhi government) and in 1998, when the Vajpayee-led BJP was in power.

BJP's manifesto for the 2014 polls included a promise to "revise and update India's nuclear doctrine".

The defence minister's comment has been read by many as a well-timed warning amid tension with Pakistan, which has targeted India over the government's move to end special status to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370.

Vipin Narang, a nuclear affairs expert at MIT in the United States, said that Singh's comments were a sign the policy on 'no first use' could change in the future.

"Make no mistake: this is by far the highest official statement—from the Raksha Mantri's (Defence Minister) mouth directly—that India may not be forever bound by No First Use," Narang said on Twitter.

'Kashmiris caged like animals'

Former J&K CM's daughter writes to New Delhi

HINDUSTAN TIMES ONLINE

In a strongly-worded letter to Indian Home Minister Amit Shah, daughter of former J&K chief minister Mehbooba Mufti said, "Kashmiris have been caged like animals and deprived of basic human rights."

Sana Iltija Javed claimed she had been threatened "with dire consequences" if she speaks up again. The daughter has given several interviews and released voice messages, including to Hindustan Times, since Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah were taken into custody on August 4, a day before the government effectively removed Article 370 which gave Jammu and Kashmir its special status.

"Today while the rest of the country celebrates India's Independence Day, Kashmiris have been caged like animals and deprived of basic human rights," she wrote in the letter addressed to Amit Shah.

It was, however, never sent across.

She explained. "Apologies for not posting this letter but as you're aware postal services in Jammu and Kashmir have been suspended," the letter said.

Sana Iltija Javed said she was not allowed to step out of her home and asked for an explanation for her alleged detention.

"Unfortunately, for reasons best known to you, I also have been placed



under detention at my residence. We are not even told when visitors are turned away from the gate and I am not allowed to step out either. Odd, since I am not affiliated to any political party and have always been a law abiding citizen," she said in a letter that was released to the media, along with a voice message.

Doesn't a citizen of the "world's largest democracy," have the right to speak up in the "face of unimaginable repression," Iltija asked, adding, "It's a tragic irony that I am being treated like a war criminal for stating the inconvenient truth," she said.

"I am being treated like a criminal and I am under constant surveillance. I fear for my life along with those Kashmiris who have spoken up," Iltija said in the audio message.

Saying it was suffocating and humiliating to be treated in this manner, she wanted to know under which law she had been detained.

Kashmir has been under strict curfew since the midnight of August 4, when mainstream leaders were placed under house arrest and all communications blocked. The following morning, home minister Amit Shah announced the dramatic revocation of Article 370 and tabled the Reorganisation Bill that converted the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories.

INDIAN FILMS, ADS

Pakistan launches crackdown

DAWN/ANN

Pakistan government has launched a crackdown on sale of Indian movies and banned airing of advertisements for India-made products on television channels in the wake of tensions over the situation in Kashmir.

"We have banned Indian advertisements and launched a crackdown on CD shops to confiscate Indian movies," said Firdous Ashiq Awan, the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information.

Talking to Dawn on Thursday, she said the interior ministry had already started a crackdown on Indian movies in the federal capital and it would be expanded to other parts of the country soon in collaboration with the provincial governments. "Today the interior ministry raided some compact disc shops in Islamabad and confiscated Indian movies."

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) has prohibited airing of advertisements for India-made products on television and radio networks.

In a letter circulated to all its television and radio licencees on Wednesday, the authority recalled that it had withdrawn permission for airing Indian channels and content on the Supreme Court's directive in October last year.

Pemra said airing of advertisements produced in India, and carrying Indian celebrities, on Pakistani media was tantamount to "negating the state policy".

According to Pemra, it had now decided to ban the broadcast of all advertisements featuring Indian products or personalities.



Sikhs for Justice hold a march and rally near the United Nations Headquarters on Indian Independence day, highlighting the human rights abuses of Sikhs in Punjab by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, in New York, on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

CLIMATE CHANGE

Pacific nations chide Australia

REUTERS, Funafuti

Small Pacific islands nations at risk from rising sea levels lambasted Australia yesterday after it blocked moves at a regional forum to set down tough policies to combat climate change.

Leaders of 18 countries in the Pacific Islands Forum concluded their meeting in Funafuti, the capital of Tuvalu, on Thursday with a communique that lacked any commitment to the policies it endorsed.

The final document encouraged policies to limit temperature rises to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7°F) above pre-industrial levels and called for an immediate halt to coal mining. But it also said member states could ignore any measures they opposed.

After being unable find a consensus, host nation Tuvalu made it clear that Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, whose strong backing of a controversial new coal mine was a key factor in his recent election victory, was central to the dispute.

KASHMIR'S HARSH LOCKDOWN

Stories of a birth and a death

REUTERS, Srinagar

Around the time Mohammad Sikander Bhat lay dying at home in Indian Kashmir's main city of Srinagar, Shafiq Ahmed was racing to get his pregnant wife to a hospital, negotiating about 85 km (53 miles) of highways through a maze of heavily guarded checkpoints.

Amid severe movement restrictions and a total communications blockade, triggered by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to withdraw special rights for Jammu and Kashmir state, one man perished without his last wish fulfilled: that of seeing his three daughters.

The other battled the odds, saved his wife, and became father to a son.

The death and the birth and both families' struggles reflect the human cost of the government's harsh clampdown in the Kashmir valley, home to nearly seven million people.

For the first five days after the government's move, parts of Srinagar had been turned into a fortress,



blanketed with armed paramilitary and rolls of concertina wire blocking main streets. Anyone attempting to cross the checkpoints faced questions.

It was around 2 pm on Aug 7 that Bhat - suffering from cancer in his 70s - asked his son to go fetch his daughters, his son said, declining to be named because he feared authorities could disapprove of him talking to the press.

On most days, it would not take more than 10 minutes to drive to their



homes, he said. That day it took more than an hour.

"By the time I came back, father had passed away," he told Reuters.

He could not even call a doctor because of the lockdown. And there were hardly any relatives present he laid his father to rest.

Kokernag, a town in southern Kashmir, where Ahmed lives with his wife and daughter, was also locked down on Aug 7, he said. A lean man with a

ready smile, Ahmed took his expectant wife to a nearby hospital for a check-up.

There, doctors concerned about her blood pressure, referred her to the district hospital at Anantnag, some 25 km away, saying they did not have staff because of the shutdown.

So, Ahmed, his wife, his daughter and sister-in-law piled into an ambulance. Ahmed said what is typically a 45-minute journey took more than two hours, passing through eight checkpoints.

At the Anantnag district hospital, staff quickly ran tests. Again they determined they could not risk it, Ahmed said, asking him to take his wife to the main maternity hospital in Srinagar, about 60 km away, for a safe delivery.

They were stopped 10 times and it took them 2-1/2 hours instead of one to get to Srinagar, where his wife was able to deliver a healthy boy.

But the rest of the family is in the dark. "Nobody has a clue where we are, in Kokernag, Anantnag or anywhere else," Ahmed said, because all communication lines are down.

FMs of China, Japan, S Korea to hold talks

Top diplomats of South Korea and Japan plan to meet their Chinese counterpart in Beijing next week amid a flare-up in tension over trade and history, Seoul's foreign ministry said yesterday. Foreign ministers Kang Kyung-wha of South Korea, Taro Kono of Japan and Wang Yi of China will meet from Tuesday to Thursday, the ministry said. The last such gathering was three years ago. Kang and Kono are also expected to meet separately on the sidelines of the event, for the first time since South Korean President Moon Jae-in on Thursday urged dialogue to mend ties. The ministry said the two-way talks had not yet been finalised. Ties between the neighbours are arguably at their lowest ebb since their relationship was normalised in 1965, hit by a heated feud over the issue South Korean forced labour during World War Two which spilled over into a bitter tit-for-tat trade row.

Top army official sacked for sexual harassment

A major general serving in Assam Rifles in the north east of India has been dismissed without pension over a case of sexual harassment involving another serving officer. The court martial proceedings against Major General RS Jaswal were confirmed by Indian Army chief General Bipin Rawat yesterday. An Army General Court Martial had in December last year recommended the dismissal of the major general. The alleged sexual harassment incident took place in late 2016 when the major general was attached to Chandimandir under the Army's Western Command, ANI reported. The officer had denied the charges against him by the captain-rank woman officer.

Sudan allows Al-Jazeera to reopen office

Sudan has allowed Qatari broadcaster Al-Jazeera to reopen its Khartoum office, which they had shut down in May, the channel's director in the Sudanese capital told AFP yesterday. "The Sudanese authorities have agreed to let us resume our work in covering Sudan," Al-Musallami Al-Kabbashi said. The Al-Jazeera crew had been informed in late May, at the height of the protests that brought down longtime ruler Omar al-Bashir, that their licence and work permits were being withdrawn. The news channel's staff had handed over equipment and closed down the office after being notified of the decision by the country's Transitional Military Council.

SOURCE: AFP

Released tanker poised to set sail

Says Iran after Gibraltar's Supreme Court ruling

AFP, Tehran

An Iranian tanker seized by Gibraltar last month is preparing to set sail after being released, a senior Iranian shipping official said yesterday.

The ship's seizure on July 4, with the help of British Royal Marines, triggered a sharp deterioration in relations between Tehran and London and the tit-for-tat detention by Iran of the British-flagged tanker Stena Impero.

The Grace 1 will be renamed and switch to the Iranian flag for its onward journey, the deputy head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organisation, Jalil Eslami, told state television.

"At the owner's request, the Grace 1 will depart for the Mediterranean after being reflagged under the Islamic Republic of Iran's flag and renamed as Adrian Darya for the voyage," Eslami said.

"The ship was of Russian origin and Panama-flagged and is carrying two million barrels of Iranian oil," he added.

Gibraltar's Supreme Court ordered the tanker released on Thursday after the British overseas territory said it had received assurances from Iran that the Grace 1 would not head to any country subject to European Union sanctions.

The vessel had been detained on suspicion that its cargo was destined for the Banyas oil refinery in Syria in breach of an EU embargo.

But Iran denied it had provided any assurances to secure the ship's release, saying Gibraltar was only seeking to "save face".



French urban climber Alain Robert, popularly known as the "French Spiderman", secures a peace banner, showing shaking hands below a depiction of the Chinese and Hong Kong flags, during his ascent of the Cheung Kong Center building in Hong Kong yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

NEWSIN brief

Man executed by electric chair in US

AFP, Washington

A man put to death in the US state of Tennessee on Thursday for murdering a woman and her daughter chose in his final hours to be electrocuted rather than executed by lethal injection, prison officials said. Stephen West, who was convicted in the two killings more than 30 years ago, waited until Wednesday to choose his method of execution -- one day after Tennessee's Republican Governor Bill Lee refused his request for clemency.

Australian tourist shot dead in NZ

REUTERS, Wellington

New Zealand police launched a manhunt for an armed suspect yesterday after an Australian tourist was found shot dead in a camper van in a coastal town on the North Island. A Canadian woman who had been traveling with the victim, a 33-year-old man, escaped from the van after the attacker drove off in it, police said. The attack on the two tourists occurred at around 3:20 am in Raglan, a coastal town in the Waikato region.

17 missing in SW China landslide

AFP, Beijing

More than a dozen workers remained missing yesterday after a landslide in southwest China buried a section of railway that was under repair, according to state media. The 17 missing people were carrying out maintenance work on the track Wednesday when the hill above them gave way, China Daily reported. The landslide in Ganluo county in Sichuan province happened very quickly, a witness told the newspaper.

N Korea fires missiles

Derides South Korea's Moon as 'impudent', rejects inter-Korean peace talks after US war drills

REUTERS, Seoul

North Korea launched at least two short-range ballistic missiles yesterday, South Korea's military said, shortly after Pyongyang described South Korea's president as "impudent" and vowed that inter-Korean talks are over.

The North has protested against joint US-South Korea military drills, largely computer-simulated, which kicked off last week, calling them a rehearsal for war. It has also fired several short-range missiles in recent weeks.

North Korea fired two more short-range projectiles into the sea off its east coast yesterday morning, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said in a statement.

Japan's defence ministry said it did not see any imminent security threat from the latest projectile launch.

A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said initial information indicated at least one projectile was fired by North Korea and appeared to be similar to the short-range missiles fired in previous



weeks. Another official said the United States was consulting with South Korea and Japan.

An official at Seoul's defence ministry said the latest test involved ballistic technology and detailed analysis was under way with the United States with the possibility that the North fired the same type of missiles it used on August 10.

The South's Moon said in a Liberation Day address on Thursday it was only through his policy of Korean national peace that dialogue with the North was still possible.

"In spite of a series of worrying actions taken by North Korea recently, the momentum for dialogue remains unshaken," Moon said in a speech marking Korea's independence from Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule.

The North's spokesman described Moon as an "impudent guy" who is "overcome with fright".

He said Moon had no standing to talk about engagement with the North because of the ongoing military manoeuvres.

'Won't repeat' Tiananmen

Says Chinese state media as HK protesters face crucial weekend test after airport setback

AFP, Beijing

Chinese state media yesterday vowed there "won't be a repeat" of the Tiananmen Square crackdown if Beijing moves to quash Hong Kong's pro-democracy protests.

In a rare reference to the bloody incident -- which is usually taboo in mainland China -- the Global Times newspaper insisted the country had more sophisticated methods than those it employed 30 years ago to crush protests in the capital.

"The incident in Hong Kong won't be a repeat of the June 4th political incident in 1989," it wrote in an editorial.

"China is much stronger and more mature, and its ability to manage complex situations has been greatly enhanced."

Hong Kong has endured 10 weeks of civil unrest, which have morphed from opposition to a hated extradition bill into a wider, and sometimes violent, call for democratic rights.

An intensifying drumbeat of

propaganda and strident warnings have sparked fears that Beijing might look to intervene -- possibly militarily -- in the semi-autonomous city.

Images of flag-waving military personnel and armoured vehicles in the border city of Shenzhen this week added to those fears, with international commentators invoking



spectre of the June 4, 1989 Tiananmen crackdown.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement faces a major test this weekend as it tries to muster another huge crowd following criticism over a recent violent airport protest and as concerns mount over Beijing's next move.

NIGERIAN PIRATES 17 seamen kidnapped off Cameroon

AFP, Yaounde

Nine Chinese and eight Ukrainian seamen were abducted on Thursday when two merchant vessels came under attack in Cameroonian waters, sources said yesterday.

"Seventeen Chinese and Ukrainians were kidnapped... (of whom) nine (are) Chinese who were abducted on one of the ships," an official in the port of Douala told AFP.

A Cameroonian security official, likewise speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed the account.

The abduction was reported on Thursday by sources in the Cameroonian navy and the country's port service, but their number and nationality were not then known.

The navy source had said the kidnappers "are probably Nigerian pirates," adding that Cameroon's security forces had launched a search for them.

The Gulf of Guinea, whose coastline stretches in a huge arc from Liberia to Gabon, is notorious for piracy as well as oil theft, illegal fishing and human and drugs trafficking.

In Malaysia, Noel Choong, who heads the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), a watchdog agency, said the 17 seamen were seized from two ships that were attacked within hours of each other while they were anchored off Douala. Choong said one of the ships was a multipurpose German-owned ship that flew the flag of Antigua and Barbuda.

"Eight crew were kidnapped from the ship consisting of a total of 12 Asian and European sailors," he said. The other vessel was a Liberian-flagged bulk carrier managed in Greece with a Greek owner.



A policeman walks past a woman injured during clashes after police banned planned protests over austerity and rising living costs called by the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party in Harare, Zimbabwe, yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

President Widodo proposes to move capital to Borneo

AFP, Jakarta

Time is running out for Jakarta. One of the fastest-sinking cities on earth, environmental experts warn that one third of it could be submerged by 2050 if current rates continue.

Decades of uncontrolled and excessive depletion of groundwater reserves, rising sea-levels, and increasingly volatile weather patterns mean swathes of it have already started to disappear.

Existing environmental measures have had little impact, so authorities are taking drastic action: the nation will have a new capital.

Its location could be announced imminently, according to local reports.

President Joko Widodo suggested a new capital in Kalimantan, on the Indonesian side of the island shared with Malaysia and Brunei, in a speech to parliament, a day before the country's independence day holiday.

"I hereby request your permission to move our national capital to Kalimantan,"

said Widodo, who will be sworn in for a second term in October after winning an election in April.

Relocating the country's administrative and political heart may be an act of national preservation, but it effectively sounds the death-knell for Jakarta where many of the city's 10 million residents have little means of escape.

"When the floods came I used to tremble," food stall owner Rasdi told AFP.

"I nearly drowned back in 2007 -- all my belongings were swept away and I had to start over again," said from his home close to Jakarta's northern port, one of the worst affected by sinking ground.

Built in an earthquake zone, on swamplands, near the confluence of 13 rivers, the city's foundations have been further stressed by unchecked development, heavy traffic, and poor urban planning.

Jakarta doesn't have a piped water system in its northern reaches, so local industry and millions of residents tap into its aquifers.



Israel to allow US Rep Tlaib to visit family in West Bank

2 Israelis, Palestinian hurt in car ramming

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel said yesterday it will allow barred US congresswoman Rashida Tlaib who is of Palestinian origin to visit her elderly grandmother in the occupied West Bank, following a pledge she would respect its conditions.

The decision taken by Interior Minister Aryeh Deri came a day after a controversial Israeli announcement that it would bar a planned weekend visit by Tlaib and fellow Muslim congresswoman Ilhan Omar over their support of a boycott of the Jewish state for its treatment of the Palestinians.

The decision to allow a "humanitarian visit" followed a pledge in a letter from the lawmaker to "respect conditions imposed by Israel", the ministry said in a statement.

Tlaib had "promised not to promote the cause of the boycott of Israel during her stay", in the letter sent overnight, it said.

Israeli media published the letter, which said: "I would like to request admittance



to Israel in order to visit my relatives, and specifically my grandmother, who is in her 90s.

"This could be my last opportunity to see her. I will respect any restrictions and will not promote boycotts against Israel during my visit."

The decision to bar the congresswomen, although encouraged by President Donald Trump, drew sharp criticism in the United States from several allies of Israel.

Meanwhile, two Israelis and one Palestinian were injured yesterday in what the Israeli army called a "terrorist" car-ramming attack near the Jewish settlement of Elazar south of Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank.

"A terrorist ran over two civilians," an English-language army statement said. A police statement said an off-duty policeman passing by the scene near Elazar settlement saw the alleged attacker trying to exit his vehicle, and fired at him.

Boost for UK PM Johnson

Trump touts 'fantastic' trade deal with post-Brexit Britain

AFP, Morristown

President Donald Trump on Thursday again signalled his desire for close trading ties with Britain once it leaves the European Union, saying a "fantastic" deal was in the works.

"I think we'll have a fantastic and big trade deal with the UK. We should do much more business than we're doing," Trump told reporters, repeating his personal support for fellow right-leaning Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who is leading the Brexit process.

Trump will meet the new British leader at the G7 in Biarritz, France, later this month, but they have already talked numerous times by phone, the White House says.

Trump said the most recent occasion was just Wednesday.

Once Britain leaves the European Union, a giant trading bloc, it will have to strike bilateral deals on free trade with separate countries. Pro-Brexit leaders are relying heavily on the traditionally close relationship

with the United States, and Trump has sought to raise expectations.

Critics of Brexit caution that Trump's aggressive trade negotiating posture has seen him take on China and allies such as Canada or the European Union alike, with hardball tactics including sweeping tariffs on imports, to force better conditions for



US products.

On Monday, Trump's hawkish foreign policy advisor John Bolton said in London that he wanted to see trade talks "move very quickly" after Brexit.

The White House is also hoping to bind London closer on foreign policy as it takes on other European

powerhouses, especially France and Germany, over Iran and other areas where trans-Atlantic alliances have frayed since Trump came to office.

In Britain, the political crisis centering Brexit took a new turn on Wednesday as opposition Labour Party has vowed to call a vote of no-confidence in Johnson's government as soon as it believes it can win it and seeks to form a temporary government under leader Jeremy Corbyn to delay Brexit.

Johnson has promised to take Britain out of the European Union by October 31, with or without a deal, setting the scene for a showdown in parliament where lawmakers are opposed to a divorce without a transition agreement.

In a letter to party leaders and other senior politicians, Corbyn said his "strictly time-limited temporary government" would delay Britain's departure from the EU beyond October 31 and hold a general election.



DENGUE RATTLES BANGLADESH

The country is gripped by the fear of dengue, which is taking its toll on people everywhere. Every day, hundreds of new patients are being admitted to already-overcrowded hospitals where long queues in front of the report delivery rooms is a common sight. Many parents are passing sleepless nights beside their children fighting dengue while doctors and nurses are working round-the-clock so that the situation does not go out of hand. Many of the hospital staff, including physicians, did not even take leave on this Eid. It comes after hospital sources said 93 people have already lost their lives to the mosquito-borne disease and the figure is feared to increase in the coming days. The government, however, put the death toll at 40.

Photo: ANISUR RAHMAN



Sudan to launch historic transition to civilian rule

AFP, Khartoum

Sudan's military rulers and protest leaders are scheduled to sign a landmark deal reached after a bloody uprising which is meant to pave the way for civilian rule.

Today's ceremony will officialise a constitutional declaration inked on August 4 between the country's Transitional Military Council and the opposition coalition of the Alliance for Freedom and Change.

The deal brought an end to nearly eight months of upheaval that saw masses mobilise against president Omar al-Bashir, who was ousted in April after 30 years in power.

The deal brokered by the African Union and Ethiopia was welcomed with relief by both sides, with protesters celebrating what they saw as the victory of their "revolution" and generals taking credit for averting civil war.

While the compromise meets several of the protest camp's key demands, its terms leave the military with ample powers and its future civilian government with daunting challenges.

With today's official signing of the transitional documents, Sudan will kick off a process that will include important immediate first steps.

The composition of the new

transitional civilian-majority ruling council is to be announced Sunday, followed two days later by the naming of a prime minister.

On Thursday, protest leaders agreed to nominate former senior UN official Abdalla Hamdok as prime minister.

The veteran economist, who stepped down last year as deputy executive secretary of the UN's Economic Commission for Africa, is to be formally selected on August 20, a statement said.

The cabinet is to be unveiled on August 28, with the newly-appointed ministers due to meet the sovereign council on September 1 for the first time.

Elections must be held after the 39-month transitional period that began on August 4.

Until then, the country of 40 million people will be ruled by the 11-member sovereign council and a government, which will -- the deal makes clear -- be dominated by civilians.

However, the interior and defence ministers are to be chosen by military members of the council.

The move towards civilian rule could lead the African Union to lift a suspension slapped on Sudan in June after a bloody crackdown on a sit-in in Khartoum.



A young boy joins protesters holding placards at a rally against the Indian government's move to strip Jammu and Kashmir of its autonomy and impose a communications blackout, in Srinagar yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Trump wants US

FROM PAGE 16

There was no official comment from the White House, and the Danish embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment.

Some Trump advisors say acquiring Greenland, which is northeast of Canada, could be good for the US, while others called it only a "fleeting fascination" from the president, The Wall Street Journal said.

Others outside the White House say Trump's interest could be a desire to secure a legacy achievement, the paper reported, and advisors wondered about the potential for research or greater military clout for the US.

The US's northern-most military base, Thule Air Base, has been located on Greenland for decades.

But Greenland doesn't quite live up to its lush name -- 85 percent of the island is covered by a 1.9-mile-thick (three-kilometre) ice sheet that contains 10 percent of the world's fresh water.

The world's largest island has suffered from climate change, scientists say, becoming a giant melting icicle that threatens to submerge the world's coastal areas one day.

July saw unprecedented melting of the Greenland ice sheet, with 12 billion tonnes of ice flowing into the sea.

Trump, who in 2017 withdrew the US from the Paris Climate Agreement to cap global warming levels, is reportedly set to visit Copenhagen in September.

This isn't the first time the president has expressed interest in foreign properties -- he has said North Korea's "great beaches" would make ideal locations for condos.

Gaibandha

FROM PAGE 16

Police (KMP) Ehsan Shah said a special team of police is conducting raids to arrest the rapist.

The girl was treated at Khulna Medical College Hospital.

WOMAN RAPED BY SUITOR

In Jhalakathi, a 22-year-old woman was raped by her suitor on Thursday night.

Shakhawat Hossain, OC of Nalchhity Police Station, said the families of the victim and suspect Sagar Hawladar were recently having discussion about their marriage.

Around 8:30pm on Thursday, Sagar took the girl by motorbike to an orchard where he raped her with the help of his aide Riaz, the OC said.

Hearing her screams, locals caught Sagar, but Riaz fled.

The girl was first taken to Nalchhity Upazila Health Complex and shifted to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital for excessive bleeding, said the victim's father.

A case was filed against the two, said the OC.

NEIGHBOUR 'RAPES' CHILD

Police arrested a man on Thursday for allegedly raping a five-year-old girl in Jashore's Chowgachha upazila.

The girl was home alone in the afternoon when neighbour Khairul Islam, 35, sneaked into the house and raped her, said her mother.

Locals caught Khairul hearing the child's screams.

A case was filed against him, said OC of Chowgachha Police Station Rifat Khan Rajib.

Iran must free women held over veil protests: UN experts

AFP, Geneva

A group of UN human rights experts yesterday called for the immediate release of three Iranian women given long jail terms for protesting laws compelling women to wear veils.

The trio were charged after a video posted online showed them handing out flowers on Tehran's metro on March 8, International Women's Day, according to a statement co-signed by five United Nations special rapporteurs and another expert.

The women -- named in the statement as Mojgan Keshavarz, Yasaman Aryani and Monireh Arabshahi -- were not wearing veils.

They "peacefully protested against Iran's compulsory veiling laws and advocated for a woman's right to choose whether or not to wear the hijab," the statement said.

According to the experts, who are independent and do not speak for the world body, the women were detained in April, "forcibly disappeared" for up

to two weeks, and denied access to a lawyer through the initial investigation.

"Their legal representatives were also reportedly prohibited from representing them at their trial," the statement said.

Keshavarz has been sentenced to 23 and a half years in prison while Aryani and Arabshahi were both given 16-year terms.

All were convicted of national security violations, spreading anti-state propaganda and "encouraging and providing for [moral] corruption and prostitution," the UN experts said.

Keshavarz was convicted of the additional crime of "insulting the sacred".

"We call upon the Iranian authorities to quash these convictions and immediately release all human rights defenders who have been arbitrarily detained for their work in advocating women's rights," the statement said.

It was co-signed by Javadi Rehman, special rapporteur on rights in Iran,

Dubravka Simonovic, UN expert on violence against women and Michel Forst, rapporteur on human rights defenders.

David Kaye, the expert on freedom of expression, Meskerem Geset Tachane, who heads the UN working group on discrimination against women and girls, and Ahmed Shaheed, rapporteur on religious freedom, also signed the letter.

The experts said Tehran responded to their concerns by noting that the women "had been arrested on charges relating to morality and national security offences".

The rapporteurs also reported that arrests of women's activists have risen in recent weeks, with Iran's government having issued an official warning that those who do not wear a veil will face severe punishment.

They cited unidentified reports that 32 people had been arrested, and at least 10 imprisoned, since January of last year for protesting against ruled mandating that hijabs be worn.

Public exam

FROM PAGE 16

period, the applicants sometimes suffer from anxieties"

According to education board officials, annual holidays and other closures eat up more than half of an academic year at many secondary-level educational institutions, forcing the students to turn to private tutors.

The teachers of those institutions also struggle to finish syllabus in almost half of the ideal time. As a result, they rush through the curriculum to prepare the students, affecting the quality of education, said teachers and experts.

The secondary schools and madrasas have at least 137 holidays including 85 public holidays and 52 Fridays. Besides, many of these institutions lose another month or so as the classrooms are used as exam centres for public examinations.

There are 30,000 secondary schools and madrasas in the country now. Last year, 3,412 of them were used as centres for SSC and equivalent exams, 2,541 for HSC and equivalent exams and 2,903 for JSC exams.

Greek fire crews make progress on island blaze

AFP, Athens

Firefighters in Greece yesterday made progress against a four-day wildfire on the island of Evia that has burned through a pine forest and threatened villages, officials said.

"The situation looks better today, there is no active front, but our forces remain in place," a fire department spokesman told AFP, adding that there are still "pockets of fire" smouldering in a ravine.

A massive force of nearly 400 firefighters backed by 110 vehicles, nine planes and four helicopters has been deployed against the blaze.

Two water bombers from Italy and one from Spain are assisting the effort, the spokesman said.

State agency ANA said the fire, which broke out Tuesday, has destroyed over 1,000 hectares of dense pine forest.

251 noted citizens slate curb

FROM PAGE 16

Nepal on Thursday, the academics, journalists and human rights activists said Article 370 of the Indian constitution represented a historical understanding between the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the Indian state.

On August 5, the Indian government not only abrogated Article 370, but also abolished the very statehood of Jammu and Kashmir, bringing the region under New Delhi's direct rule, it read.

"The manner in which the abrogation was accomplished, through executive order and in the absence of a state legislature, is a betrayal of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, whose elected representatives were never consulted.

"This is a sharp departure from democratic governance, and the constitutional validity of these decisions has been rightfully challenged," mentioned the statement.

The noted personalities condemned the curtailment of civil liberties in Jammu and Kashmir; the blackout of telecommunications and internet services; the severe restrictions on media and on the freedoms of movement, peaceful assembly, and protest; and the violent suppression of demonstrations.

These are all violations of international human rights obligations, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which India ratified in 1979, they pointed out.

"We are alarmed by credible media reports of security forces having opened fire on peaceful protestors and disturbed by the denials issued by the authorities, who have gone on to accuse journalists of fabrication.

"We are gravely concerned by the government of India's silencing of voices of dissent, and detention of social activists, lawyers, journalists, and human rights defenders.

We condemn the Government of India's use of majoritarian populism to perpetuate a climate of fear across

the country."

They said the actions of the Indian government exhibit a complete lack of respect for constitutionalism, secularism, and democratic values, which do not bode well for India's people, who have, uniquely in South Asia, benefited from decades of democratic rule.

"We are apprehensive of India's future as a democracy and the implications that this degeneration will have on its population of 1.2 billion as well as on the rest of the subcontinent."

They urged the Indian government to immediately end the "inhuman clampdown" in Jammu and Kashmir, to restore civil liberties as well as the flow of information, release all political detainees and prisoners, and to enter into dialogue with the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"In the middle of August, when we are meant to celebrate independence from colonialism, we condemn this regression towards despotic rule.

We stand in solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and with people across India and South Asia who aspire to peace, prosperity, and fundamental freedoms," they noted.

The signatories include Veena Das, professor of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore; Partha Chatterjee, professor of Columbia University, USA; AS Panneerselvam, a journalist in Chennai; Ayesha Jalal of Tufts University, Massachusetts; Shahidul Alam, a photographer from Dhaka; Kul Chandra Gautam, ex-assistant secretary general of the UN; historian Gyanendra Pandey of Emory University; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, professor of Syracuse University, New York; MV Ramana, professor of University of British Columbia, Vancouver; Pervez Hoodbhoy of Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad; Zia Mian of Princeton University; Sofia Karim, architect and artist from London; Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, filmmaker from Karachi; Martha C Nussbaum, professor of University of Chicago, and Sheldon Pollock, professor of Columbia University.

Najib Razak faces trial

FROM PAGE 16

He has pleaded not guilty and says the charges are politically motivated.

Prosecutors yesterday handed to the defence thousands of pages of documents related to the case, government lawyer Ahmad Akram Gharib told Reuters.

"Under the rules, a trial can only begin at least two weeks after all the related documents are handed over," he said, adding that about 60 witnesses were expected to be called in the second case.

The first trial, which began in April and revolves around former 1MDB unit SRC International, was adjourned on August 14 after Najib contracted an eye infection, halting the cross-examination of the prosecution's final witness.

That case is also expected to resume on Monday, and lawyers from both sides hope the second trial can be delayed to allow prosecutors to wrap up the first.

"The accused can only be at one place at a time," Najib's lawyer, Harvinderjit Singh, said. "We are hoping the judge will allow us some

leeway in this matter."

After the shock election loss, Najib and his wife Rosmah Mansor were barred from leaving Malaysia and their luxurious lifestyle came under scrutiny, with the discovery of nearly \$300 million worth of goods and cash at properties linked to him.

Rosmah, known for her designer handbags and jewellery, has also been charged with corruption. She has pleaded not guilty.

Najib's lawyers say he had no knowledge of the transfers into his accounts and was misled by Malaysian financier Low Taek Jho and SRC's former chief executive, Nik Faisal Ariff Kamil, who are both at large.

Low, who faces charges in the United States and Malaysia over his alleged central role in the 1MDB case, has consistently denied wrongdoing. A spokesman for Low did not respond to a request for comment.

Nik Faisal, who has never publicly commented on the matter, could not be reached for comment.

Youths preferred in Jamie Day's squad

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday named a 25-member preliminary squad for the national team's first match of the joint qualifiers for the 2022 World Cup and the 2023 Asian Cup against Afghanistan, with an eye on the future by making a number of changes to the squad from the pre-qualifiers against Laos in June.

Six players including one new face have been added to the squad from the Laos fixtures

SQUAD
Goalkeepers: Ashrafur Islam Rana, Shahidul Alam Sohel, Anisur Rahman Zico
Defenders: Tutul Hossain Badsha, Shushanto Tripura, Rahmat Mia, Monjurur Rahman Manik, Yeasin Khan, Bishwanath Ghosh, Yeasin Arafat, Nurun Naim Faisal, Riyadul Hasan
Midfielders and strikers: Mashuk Miah Johnny, Jamal Bhuiyan, Mamunul Islam, Sohel Rana, Rabiul Hasan, Biplo Ahmed, Arfur Rahman, Mohammad Ibrahim, Nabib Newaz Jibon, Mahbubur Rahman Sufi, Matin Miah, Saad Uddin, Jewel Rana

while four players from that squad have been left out.

Goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel, midfielders Saad Uddin and Jewel Rana – all three from Abahani – along



YEASIN ARAFAT

with Bashundhara Kings defender Nurun Nayeem Faisal and Sheikh Jamal defender Manjurur Rahman Manik made a return to the squad while Saif Sporting Club defender Yeasin Arafat has been included in the squad for the first time. The four players who have been left out from the previous squad are: Bashundhara Kings defender Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, midfielder Emon Babu, forward Tawhidul Alam Sabuj and Arambagh goalkeeper Mazharul Islam Himel.

It is believed that head coach Jamie Day, who will return from England on August 19 and start the preparation camp a week later, prepared the list after having followed most of the

matches of the second phase of the Bangladesh Premier League on video streaming services.

All four players who have been left out are veterans while five added players except for goalkeeper Shahidul Alam are young ones. It is understood that this squad is part of the coach's plans to add more young blood to the team while phasing out the older ones, who have not been in exceptional form and are not as agile as the younger ones.

The exclusions of Nasiruddin, Emon and Sabuj are a bit of a surprise though as they were all in relatively decent form and have big-match experience. However, the coach is of the opinion that the ones that got



JAMIE DAY

nods ahead of these players have deserved their call-ups.

"Nasir has been a fantastic servant and a player I admire, but he is not getting any younger. The younger ones are the future with experience around them. I still believe Emon can play for the national team again, but at the moment, I feel there are a few players in front of him in his position. I think Sabuj has a future in national team but unfortunately he hasn't played enough games and other players in his position are more match fit," Day told reporters in a social media exchange yesterday.

The 25-man squad is expected to be trimmed to 23 members prior to the team's departure for Tajikistan on September

1, where the qualifying match against Afghanistan will be held on September 10.

Although the preparation camp is expected to begin on either August 25 or 26 in Dhaka, the coach will have all the players at his disposal on August 30 following the completion of the AFC Cup inter-zone playoff semifinal of Abahani, who have seven members in the 25-man squad. Bangladesh Premier League champions Bashundhara Kings also have seven members while Sheikh Russel and Saif Sporting have four players each in the squad. Arambagh have two players while Sheikh Jamal have one player in the 25-man squad.

'Rookies need more work'

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) selectors have been often criticised for not utilising the pipeline while naming replacements for regular players in the Bangladesh squad and usually giving the nod to players past their prime.

Perhaps the selectors keep revisiting the same options because of a lack of new players who have the requisite skills for the national team.

Simon Helmot, head coach of Bangladesh's High Performance (HP) programme, also spoke about how players in the HP team are still lagging miles behind in terms of being considered for national selection.

"Yes, I am [happy with their improvement] but they still need to improve. When they will get more opportunities they will be ready. They need physical preparation, in the fielding, in back-foot play, in concentration on the ball to ensure that when they play for the national side, it will not be new.

"These gentlemen are very inexperienced. [Nazmul Hossain] Shanto played some games, Yasir [Ali] has been around, Afif [Hossain] played a T20I. What these guys need now is to dominate at this level," said Helmot at the BCB Academy ground yesterday.

Helmot will be managing the 15-member HP team which was announced by the BCB yesterday for the three-match one-day series against the Sri Lanka HP team, who arrived in Dhaka yesterday. After the three one-dayers, the visitors will finish the tour with two four-day matches.

The Bangladesh A team struggled against their visiting Afghan counterparts in July, when a lack of consistency from the players saw Bangladesh A lose the two-match four-day series 1-0 and draw the five-match one-day series after a controversial draw in the fourth one-dayer.

Players like Naim Sheikh, Afif, Nazmul, Aminul Islam and a few others who have represented Bangladesh A against Afghanistan A were also included in the 15-member HP squad for the Sri Lanka series. Chief selector Minhajul Abedin has already mentioned that the board will search the HP team to blood new players for the upcoming one-off Test against Afghanistan and the ensuing triangular T20I series involving hosts Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe.

Watling half-century puts Kiwis in front

AFP, Galle



Watling helped New Zealand to take a lead of 177 at stumps on Day Three in the first Test match against Sri Lanka in Galle on Friday.

New Zealand, who trailed Sri Lanka by 18 runs in the first innings, finished on 195 for seven and a target around 200 could prove tricky for the hosts.

Spinners have long ruled the roost at Galle and towards the tail end of the game they tend to become even more threatening.

The highest successful run chase in here is 99 by Sri Lanka against Pakistan in 2014 and armed with a three-pronged spin attack, New Zealand should be already feeling comfortable.

It was a thrilling day's Test match

with both teams fighting tooth and nail for the initiative and at stumps on Day Three New Zealand emerged on top thanks to the efforts of Watling, who finished unbeaten on 63.

New Zealand had slumped to 25 for three losing top batsmen Ross Taylor (3) and Kane Williamson (4) cheaply and at 124 for six with only a lead of 106 runs and four wickets remaining, they were playing catch up.

But Watling found an ideal partner in Tim Southee as the pair shared a 54-run stand to turn the game in New Zealand's favour.

Sri Lanka were sloppy on the field with Southee dropped three times. Lasith Embuldeniya provided the much-needed breakthrough when Southee gave him the charge and was stumped by Niroshan Dickwella. He made 23. It was Embuldeniya's fourth wicket in the innings.

Watling had been given out leg before to Embuldeniya when he was on one. But the batsman successfully reviewed the decision. Watling who has six Test hundreds and posted a career best unbeaten 142 against Sri Lanka was again being a thorn in their flesh with an unbeaten 63 that came off 138 balls with five fours.

Earlier, after resuming on 227 for seven, Niroshan Dickwella top scored for Sri Lanka with 61 as they went onto post 267. Dickwella and Suranga Lakmal were involved in a crucial 81 run stand for the eighth wicket that enabled them to take a lead. Lakmal made 40.

Ajaz Patel became the first New Zealander to take five wickets in Galle and he was well backed up by William Somerville and Trent Boult, who shared five wickets between the two of them.



New Zealand wicketkeeper-batsman BJ Watling hit an unbeaten 63 to put his side in a comfortable position on the third day of the third Test against Sri Lanka at Galle yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Shastri reappointed as India coach

What it means for the Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

The appointment of Bangladesh's new head coach has remained the talk of the town and became more interesting after Ravi Shastri toppled former New Zealand coach Mike Hesson to retain the role of India's head coach yesterday.

There was talk that the BCB was waiting on the result of Hesson's India appointment. It was learned that the former Kiwi coach was among the favourites for the BCB as well.

According to sources close to BCB, although Hesson was not appointed as the Indian coach there will not be any changes in plans as the board already came to a decision regarding the coach.

"It is not like our plan ill change after Hesson was not appointed the Indian coach," a top BCB official told The Daily Star yesterday, requesting anonymity.

It was learned that BCB president Nazmul Haqqan will announce the name soon, with formewr South Africa coach Russel Domingo among the favourites.



AFP, New Delhi



Former Indian cricketer Ravi Shastri has been reappointed as head coach of the men's cricket team, a cricket board selection panel announced Friday.

Publicly backed by Indian captain Virat Kohli, 57-year-old Shastri was always the frontrunner.

He saw off competition from former Indian all-rounder Robin Singh, former team manager Lalchand Rajput, former New Zealand coach Mike Hesson, Australian cricket coach Tom Moody and former West Indies coach Phil Simmons.

Simmons had backed out of the interview last minute, news agency PTI reported.

The remaining candidates were interviewed by a three-member cricket advisory committee panel which included World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev, ex-national coach Anshuman Gaekwad and ex-women's team captain Shantha Rangaswamy.

Dev announced the decision at a Friday press conference.

After missing out on the coach's job to Anil Kumble in 2016, Shastri was selected as the team's head coach a year later for a term extending to the end of the 2019 World Cup.

He was given a 45-day extension for the current West Indies tour.

Shastri coached India to a historic first-ever test series win in Australia earlier this year following Test losses in South Africa and England.

Since he took the job, India have won 13 Tests out of 21, 25 out of 36 T20 matches and 43 out of 60 ODIs.

Shastri was an all-rounder best known as part of the India's World Cup-winning squad in 1983 and his man of the series performance in India's World Championship triumph in Australia in 1985.

He was also team director from 2014 to 2016.

Shastri played 80 Tests and 150 one-day internationals for India before becoming a successful TV commentator.

April 25 SC to arrive today

SPORTS REPORTER

North Korean league champions April 25 SC will arrive in Dhaka today for the first leg of the inter-zonal playoff semifinal against Abahani, which will be held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on August 21.

April 25 are the most successful club in North Korean football, having won 17 national championships thus far, including the one they won last year.

While Abahani emerged champions of Group E, also featuring Chennaiyin FC, Minerva Punjab and Manang Marshiyangdi Club, April 25 got the better of two Hong Kong Clubs and one club from Taiwan in Group I.

The North Korean outfit had reached the inter-zonal playoff final last year where they lost against Altyn Asyr of Turkmenistan on away goals.

Abahani, meanwhile, have reached the knockout stage of this second-tier club competition of Asia for the first time and are looking to make it further.

While April 25 are expected to be tough opponents, one factor that might work in Abahani's favour is that they have four quality foreign players in their squad while their opposition team only features home-grown players.

The second leg of the semifinal will be held on August 28 in Pyongyang.

Archer strikes on debut as Aus stumble

AFP, London



England fast bowler Jofra Archer marked his Test debut with a wicket as Australia suffered a top-order collapse at Lord's on Friday.

Australia lost three wickets for 11 runs on the way to reaching 80-4 when rain forced an early lunch on the third day of the second Test.

That left Australia 178 runs behind England's first-innings 258.

Archer, on the ground where he bowled the Super Over that saw England seal a World Cup final win over New Zealand last month, had fine figures of one wicket for 18 runs in 13 overs.

But Australia star batsman Steve Smith was still there on 13 not out, with Matthew Wade unbeaten on nought.



Australia, 1-0 up in the five-match series after their 251-run win in the first Test at Edgbaston, resumed on 30-1 having seen Stuart Broad dismiss David Warner cheaply for the third time in as many innings this series.

Play resumed under gloomy skies, the floodlights on at full beam, with conditions difficult for batting.

Cameron Bancroft was five not out and Usman Khawaja 18 not out following a lively opening spell by Archer, in for the injured James Anderson, England's all-time leading Test wicket-taker, late on Thursday.

Khawaja struck two offside fours in as many balls when first-change Chris Woakes dropped short.

But England altered the momentum of the morning with two wickets for no runs in four balls as Australia's 60-1 became 60-3.

Archer had his first Test wicket when he nipped one back sharply to have Bancroft lbw for 13.

The 24-year-old Sussex paceman's celebrations were put on hold as Bancroft reviewed.

But replays showing the ball would have clipped the top of the stumps meant Aleem Dar, equalling Steve Bucknor's record of 128 Tests umpired, saw his decision upheld.

There were some boos as Smith, fresh from twin hundreds at Edgbaston in his comeback Test following a 12-month ball-tampering ban, came into bat.

He could only watch as Woakes, with England at last bowling over the wicket to Khawaja, induced an outside edge to wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow that saw the left-hander caught behind for 36.

Australia were 71-4 when Broad had Travis Head lbw for seven, although England had to review Dar's original not out verdict, with technology indicating the ball would have smashed into the left-hander's middle and leg stumps.

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

English Premier League

Arsenal v Burnley

Live from 5:30pm

Southampton v Liverpool

Live from 8:00pm

Man City v Tottenham

Live from 10:30pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT 2

Bundesliga

Dortmund v Augsburg

Live from 7:30pm

Monchengladbach v Schalke

Live from 10:30pm

SONY SIX

The Ashes

England v Australia

Second Test, Day Four

Live from 4:00pm

SONY ESPN

Sri Lanka v New Zealand

First Test, Day Four

Live from 10:30am



Real Madrid forward Eden Hazard (C) jogs with teammates during a training session at Real Madrid's sport city yesterday ahead of their tonight's La Liga match against Celta Vigo.

PHOTO: AFP

Atletico dreaming of glory again

AFP, Madrid

Atletico Madrid began the summer by losing six of their best players but are ending it with greater belief than ever they can beat Real Madrid and Barcelona to the La Liga title, thanks in part to the exhilarating form of new striker Joao Felix.

Diego Simeone was tasked with his biggest rebuild since taking charge in 2011 after an exodus that not only drained his team of talent, including star man Antoine Griezmann, but caused many to wonder if the team could ever be the same again.

They lost four defenders, with full-backs Filipe Luis and Juanfran going to Brazil with Flamengo and Sao Paulo, captain Diego Godin moving to Inter Milan, and young gem Lucas Hernandez snapped up by Bayern Munich.

They also lost their defensive midfielder Rodri to Manchester City after just a year at the club, while the spat between Atleti and Barca over Griezmann's messy departure left a bad taste in the mouth.

Few would expect Griezmann and the 75 million euro (\$84 million) Frenkie de Jong not to make Barca even stronger, an ominous prospect given they won La Liga by 11 points only three months ago, but Atletico look best-placed to capitalise should they falter.

Forward Felix is at the heart of the optimism following his arrival for 120 million euros, erasing the pain of the Frenchman's exit even before a competitive ball has been kicked.

The 19-year-old has dazzled during pre-

season, his most impressive outing coming against Juventus and his fellow Portuguese Cristiano Ronaldo on Saturday, when he scored one and set up the other in a 2-1 win in Stockholm.

"Wherever you put him, he reads the game really well," said Simeone. "The best thing about him though is that he wants to learn. When this is the case, adaptation is always quicker."

Mario Hermoso, Kieran Trippier and Renan Lodi all appear excellent defensive additions while Marcos Llorente from Real Madrid should prove a shrewd replacement for silky Rodri.

Atletico finished 12 points ahead of Real last season and a series of bad summer displays from Zinedine Zidane's side -- including a 7-3 defeat to their Madrid rivals -- inspire little confidence despite the arrival of Eden Hazard.

FIXTURES

(all times GMT)

SATURDAY

Celta Vigo v Real Madrid (1500), Valencia v Real Sociedad (1700), Mallorca v Eibar (1800), Leganes v Osasuna (1900), Villarreal v Granada (1900)

SUNDAY

Alaves v Levante (1500), Espanyol v Sevilla (1700), Real Betis v Real Valladolid (1900), Atletico Madrid v Getafe (2000)

Hazard to miss opener against Celta

AFP, Madrid

Eden Hazard will miss the start of the season after sustaining a thigh injury in training on Friday, the day before Real Madrid's La Liga opener against Celta Vigo.

Hazard was ready to make his debut in Vigo after joining Madrid for an initial 100 million euros from Chelsea in June.

But the Belgian pulled up with a minor strain at the club's training base in Valdebebas and is now expected to be out for three to four weeks.

"After tests carried out after training today on our player Eden Hazard by the Real Madrid Medical Services, he has been diagnosed with a muscular injury to the anterior part of his right thigh," a club statement read. "His recovery will continue to be assessed."

Madrid begin away at Celta on Saturday before facing Real Valladolid and a trip to Villarreal ahead of the international break.

Hazard could be in line to return for their match against Levante at the Santiago Bernabeu on September 1.

Keeper headache for Klopp

AFP, London

Liverpool goalkeeper Adrian faces a late fitness test to see if he can face Southampton on Saturday after being injured by a pitch invader during celebrations of Wednesday's UEFA Super Cup win over Chelsea.

The Spaniard, who only joined the European champions on August 5, capped his full debut in style by saving Tammy Abraham's penalty to win Liverpool a shootout 5-4 following a 2-2 draw in Istanbul.

However, Adrian's ankle was injured when a fan ran on the pitch to join in the shootout celebrations and went careering into a huddle of Liverpool players when he slipped on the pitch.

"I really don't understand it why, in the world of social media where you are all on it, when we were all together a supporter jumped over something, was chased by some security guys, slipped and kicked (Adrian's) ankle. Crazy," said Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp.

"Yesterday it was swollen. Today I spoke to him and he said it is better, much better than yesterday, but we have to see.

"He could not have played directly after we landed in Liverpool, but I saw him now, he is ok and it looks better, but the decision will be made tomorrow -- there is no chance to make it early."

Liverpool are already without normal number one Alisson Becker due to a calf injury picked up in the Premier League season opener against Norwich and could have to cope without the Brazilian for up to two months.

ADRIAN

Zidane now counting on Bale

AFP, Madrid

Zinedine Zidane has admitted Gareth Bale is back in his plans ahead of Real Madrid's opening La Liga game of the season against Celta Vigo on Saturday.

Eden Hazard sustained a thigh injury in training on Friday, meaning Bale could even start against Celta following a turbulent summer for the Welshman.

Zidane was keen for Bale to be sold but Madrid cancelled a deal with Chinese club Jiangsu Suning while the winger's salary of around 18 million euros a year has proven too high for other interested clubs.

Bale is also eager to stay at Madrid, where he has a contract until 2022, and is not interested in moving to Paris Saint-Germain, despite suggestions he could be included in a bid for Neymar.

"It looked like he was leaving and now he's here with us, that's it," Zidane said. "The dynamic changes and things change and now I'm going to count on him like everyone else. I said it a short time ago, I'm going to count on all the players that are here."

City seek Spurs revenge

Lampard hoping for home comforts

AFP, London

Manchester City will seek revenge against Tottenham on Saturday for their dramatic Champions League exit last season as Liverpool and Manchester United also look to build on impressive Premier League starts this weekend.

City completed the first ever domestic treble of trophies in England last season, but fell short once more in the Champions League as Tottenham progressed from their quarter-final tie on away goals.

VAR disallowed Raheem Sterling's strike deep into stoppage time of a thrilling second leg 4-3 win for the English champions in April, robbing Sterling of his hat-trick on the night and City a place in the last four.

Yet, Sterling has started the new campaign as he finished the last, scoring a hat-trick on the opening weekend as City thrashed West Ham 5-0 to already move to the top of the table.

Tottenham were also victorious against Aston Villa, but needed to come from behind and two goals in the final five minutes from Harry Kane to secure a 3-1 win over promoted Aston Villa.

Kane has warned that Spurs cannot fall behind so early in the campaign if they want to maintain a title challenge.

"We have to make sure we get off to a good start," said the England captain.

"It's important that we stay in touch as long as we can.

"We have full belief that we can go all the way but there's a long road ahead."

Liverpool will hope to have forged ahead by the time City and Spurs kick-off at the Etihad when they travel to a Southampton side reeling from a disappointing 3-0 defeat at Burnley to start the season.

Chelsea were the only member of the 'big six' to get off to a losing start as the Blues were humbled 4-0 by Manchester United in Frank Lampard's first game in charge.

The former England midfielder fairly argued that the scoreline was very harsh on his side after they

FIXTURES

(1400 GMT unless stated)

SATURDAY

Arsenal v Burnley (1130), Aston Villa v Bournemouth, Brighton v West Ham, Everton v Watford, Norwich v Newcastle, Southampton v Liverpool, Manchester City v Tottenham (1630)

SUNDAY

Sheffield United v Crystal Palace (1300), Chelsea v Leicester (1530)

MONDAY

Wolves v Manchester United (1900)

enjoyed the better of the opening hour.

And there was further encouragement for Lampard in his side's performance despite losing the UEFA Super Cup to Liverpool on penalties after a 2-2 draw in Istanbul on Wednesday.

"To lose the game was disappointing but if it means Chelsea's season can be something like how we played today, we'll be OK," he said.

Morocco appoint Halilhodzic

AFP, Rabat

Former Japan boss Vahid Halilhodzic was named as the new coach of Morocco on Thursday, his third job with an African nation.

The 67-year-old succeeds Herve Renard, who quit after the Africa Cup of Nations and has since taken over at Saudi Arabia.

"To reach the World Cup finals in 2022 is my main objective," said Halilhodzic, who was recently the coach of French club Nantes.

"It's the fourth time that I will try to take a team to a World Cup."

Halilhodzic, who left Nantes on August 2 by mutual agreement, has also coached Ivory Coast and Algeria -- whom he took to the second round of the World Cup in 2014 for the first time in the country's history.

He was in charge of Japan from 2015 until 2018 but was axed just two months before the World Cup finals in Russia.

Alaba calls for more Bayern transfers

AFP, Berlin

David Alaba became the latest Bayern Munich star to urge the club to ramp up their activity in the transfer market, and also cast doubt upon his own future in comments to the Austrian news agency APA on Friday.

Ahead of Bayern's German league opener against Hertha Berlin on Friday, Austrian international Alaba said Bayern needed to sign "one or two" more players before the transfer window closes on September 2.

"The season is long and we need more than just a high-quality squad, we also need a large squad," the 27-year-old said.

"I think that another one or two players should come to raise the competition and then we'd be well-stocked in terms of breadth."

Alaba is the second senior player to openly call for more signings following comments from star striker Robert Lewandowski, while the agent of captain Manuel Neuer has also said more reinforcements are needed.

Bayern have faced criticism for their sluggishness in this year's transfer window after several senior players, including Arjen

Robben, Franck Ribery and Mats Hummels, left the club at the end of last season.

The German giants signed French World Cup winning defenders Benjamin Pavard and Lucas Hernandez earlier this year, and secured Inter Milan winger Ivan Perisic on a one-year loan this week.

Perisic was signed as a back-up option after Bayern's primary transfer target, Manchester City winger Leroy Sane, suffered an anterior cruciate ligament tear earlier this month.

The Bavarians have also been heavily linked to Barcelona midfielder Philippe Coutinho and Juventus forward Mario Mandzukic, so Alaba is confident more signings could be made.

"I have faith in our bosses and I think that there is more to come," he said.

The Austrian also cast doubt on his own future at the club, with his current contract set to expire in 2021.

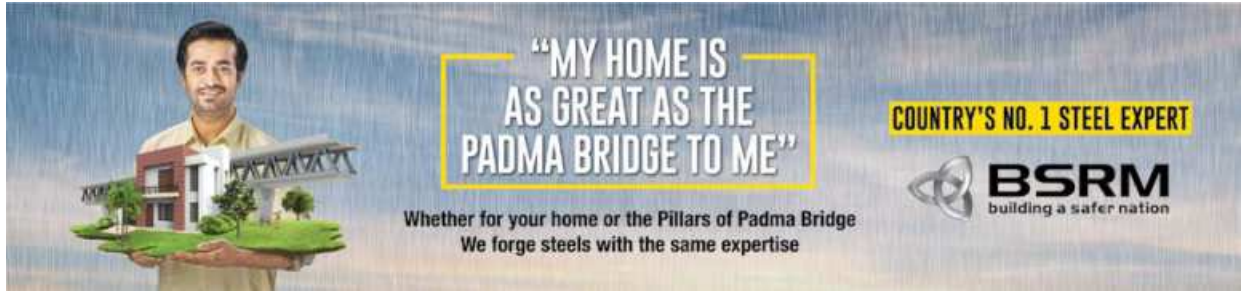
"My focus is entirely on Bayern. I don't know what will happen in the next year," said Alaba, who has previously been linked with a move to Barcelona.

"I have always said I am a player who looks for new challenges. Whether they come at Bayern or somewhere else, I can't say."



Chelsea manager Frank Lampard smiles during a press conference at Cobham Training Centre in London yesterday on the eve of their Premier League match against Leicester City.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Gaibandha cop sued over rape of college girl

3 more rapes reported in 3 dists

STAR REPORT

A police constable has been sued on charge of raping his girlfriend in Gaibandha.

The victim's mother filed the case against Constable of Rangpur range Abu Bakkar Siddiqui and his aide Aminul Islam, with Gaibandha Sadar Police Station Thursday.

Both of them are on the run, said Officer-in-Charge Khan Md Shahriar.

The 19-year-old girl was a class XI student at a local college and had a relationship with Bakkar, said her mother.

On Tuesday, they went to visit some nearby places, but Bakkar and his friend Aminul tricked her into a bamboo garden where they tortured and raped her, she said.

The girl was sent to hospital for medical examination.

7-YR-OLD RAPED IN KHULNA

Meanwhile, a seven-year-old girl was raped in Khulna city yesterday when she went to a neighbour's house to play with other children.

A young man lured the girl with chocolate and raped her at another house, according to the victim's mother.

"There was a wedding ceremony of my cousin going on next door. At that time, we could not find her for about 20-25 minutes. When she returned, she was bleeding," the mother said. The girl said she did not know the rapist, but can recognise him.

Deputy Police Commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1



A worker applies salt to rawhide which has been piled up along Beribadh Road in the capital's Hajariabagh area. Locals said although handling of rawhide is prohibited in the area, some traders are storing it there, polluting the environment. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Novelist Rizia Rahman passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Noted novelist Rizia Rahman died at a hospital in the city yesterday. She was 79.

Rizia breathed her last at Apollo Hospitals in the morning, said an official release.

Born on December 28, 1939, in Bhabanipur, Kolkata, she authored many memorable books, including "Bong Theke Bangla" (1978); "RokterOkshor" (1978), "Ghar Bhanga Ghar" (1974), "Uttar Purush" (1977), "Surja Sabuj Rakta" (1980), "Ekal Cirokal" (1984), and the autobiography "Nodi Nirobodhi" (2011).

She received many prestigious awards, including Ekushey Padak (2019), Bangla Academy Literary Award, Jashore Sahitya Parishad Puraskar, Bangladesh Lekhika Sangha Shwarna Padak and Ananya Sahitya Puraskar.

President Abdul Hamid expressed profound shock and sorrow at the death of the prominent writer.

In a condolence message, the president prayed for salvation of her departed soul and expressed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid expressed deep shock at the demise of Rizia.

In a message, he said, "The death of the renowned novelist is an irreparable loss in the cultural arena of the country. People will remember her for her great contributions in Bangla language and literature."



PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 17

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-25 12-45 4-45 6-38 8-00
JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-41 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Public exam schedule to get short

Govt decision to allow more classroom learning

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Public examinations will now take less time than before as the government looks to increase academic hours.

The next Junior School Certificate examination will be held in 10 days instead of 15 and Secondary School Certificate examination will be held in 29 days instead of 35, said officials.

Prof Ziaul Haque, chief of Inter-Education Board Coordination Subcommittee, told The Daily Star they already set a calendar for next JSC and SSC examinations that would consume less time.

He said, "We are also planning to do the same with Higher Secondary Certificate examination from 2020."

The decisions have been made so that students get more academic hours, he reasoned.

Prof Ziaul said, "We also put mental pressure on the examinees and their family members with the existing exam calendar. If the examinations run for a longer

SEE PAGE 13 COL 4

Unicef seeks urgent investment in edn

UNB, Dhaka

The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) has called for urgent investment in education of the Rohingya children who live at different refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

The call came from a report titled "Beyond Survival: Rohingya Refugee Children in Bangladesh" that was produced yesterday.

According to the report, the overall education sector had provided non-formal education to 280,000 children aged between four and 14 by June 2019.

Unicef and its partners have ensured access to learning for 192,000 of those children, enrolled in 2,167 learning centres.

However, this leaves over 25,000 children who are not attending any learning programmes, and an additional 640 learning centres are needed, according to Unicef.

Further, 97 per cent of children aged between 15 and 18 are not attending any type of educational facility, the report said.

"For the Rohingya children and youths, now in Bangladesh, mere survival is not enough," said Unicef Executive Director Henrietta Fore.

"It's absolutely critical that they are provided with the quality learning and skill development that they need to guarantee their long-term future."

More formal teaching and learning materials are being progressively rolled out for younger refugee children studying in camp learning centres.

Unicef and other agencies are calling on the governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh to allow the use of national educational resources.

"Providing learning and training materials is a huge task and can only be realised with the full backing of a range of partners," said Fore, adding, "But the hopes of a generation of children and adolescents are at stake. We cannot afford to fail them."

KASHMIR 251 noted citizens slate curb on civil liberty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 251 eminent personalities from South Asia, Europe and North America have condemned the Indian government's scrapping of Kashmir's special status and curtailment of civil liberties in the valley, saying such acts mean betrayal of the people there.

Expressing deep concern, they said they are distraught that the people of the beleaguered land, who have lived with violence and political disempowerment for decades, have now been "subjected to a further erosion of their rights under the intensified military suppression of the last 10 days".

In a statement issued from Kathmandu in

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

Trump wants US to buy Greenland



AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump is asking advisers if it is possible for the US to buy Greenland, according to a report.

Trump has expressed interest in the self-governing part of Denmark -- which is mostly covered in ice -- asking advisors if it is possible for the US to acquire the territory, The Wall Street Journal said Thursday, citing people familiar with the discussions.

The president has been curious about the area's natural resources and geopolitical relevance, the paper reported.

Greenland is a self-governing region of Denmark, which colonised the 772,000 square-mile (two-million square kilometre) island in the 18th century, and is home to nearly 57,000 people, most of whom belong to the indigenous Inuit community.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

Over 1,000 shanties gutted in massive fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A massive fire broke out at a slum in Chalanika area of the capital's Mirpur last night, reducing more than a thousand shanties to ashes.

Twenty firefighting units were frantically trying to douse the flames which spread to several nearby buildings at Mirpur-7.

Strong wind was making the job of the firefighters difficult.

No casualty was reported as of 9:30pm.

The fire originated at the slum around 7:22pm, said duty officer at Fire Service and Civil Defence control room.

The cause of the fire was unknown.

Many slum dwellers were seen wailing while many others took shelter at nearby places.

Police and Rab members were seen trying to stop on-lookers to make way from firefighters to the spot.



Shanties go up in flames at a slum in the capital's Mirpur-7 area as a fire breaks out there last evening. A total of 14 fire engines tackled the blaze.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Najib Razak faces trial over 1MDB

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia's former prime minister, Najib Razak, on Monday faces the biggest of five trials linked to a multi-billion-dollar scam at state fund 1MDB, although lawyers are seeking a delay to allow time for the completion of a previous trial.

Najib, who lost a general election last year, has been hit with 42 criminal charges of graft and money laundering at 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) and other state entities.

1MDB, founded by Najib in 2009, is being investigated in at least six countries, and the US Department of Justice says about \$4.5 billion was misappropriated from the fund.

In his second trial at the Kuala Lumpur High Court, Najib will have to fight 21 charges of money laundering and four of abuse of power for receiving illegal transfers of about 2.3 billion ringgit (\$550.8 million) between 2011 and 2014.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

In Road Accident, Chest Pain, Heart Attack, Stroke or any other Emergency

Call 10666
0191 400 1234

