

Trump plans campaign-style rallies to protest election outcome

SEE PAGE 6

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"We do not want wastage of any money for our project and any wee bug to eat the money ... we will not let it happen."

DSCC MAYOR SHEIKH FAZLE NOOR TAPOSH



"Since when does the Lamestream Media call who our next president will be?"

US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP SLAMS MAINSTREAM MEDIA FOR DECLARING BIDEN WINNER IN PRESIDENTIAL POLLS



"The American people can have confidence that this election was fundamentally fair, its integrity will be upheld, and its outcome is clear."

FORMER US PRESIDENT GEORGE W BUSH CONGRATULATES PRESIDENT-ELECT JOE BIDEN



THE MAYORAL mechanism

How family members of Cox's Bazar Municipality boss made huge bucks from acquisition of disputed land

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Cig

The land acquisition office of Cox's Bazar acquired 1.171 acres of disputed land from the wife and brother-in-law of the municipality mayor at Tk 36 crore for a project in violation of multiple acquisition and property transfer laws.

The market price for equivalent land in the area is approximately Tk 2 crore. The land acquisition started in October last year for the Tk 150-crore project to build a surface water treatment plant, being implemented by Cox's Bazar Municipality.

Project documents obtained and analysed by The Daily Star show Mujibor Rahman, the mayor of Cox's Bazar, lobbied for the site in Jhilongjha area even though it was 11 times more expensive than an alternative proposed.

The original owners, as identified in documents, claim they did not even know that their plots had been acquired from a third party until they saw government officials on their land.

The five are the owners as per RS and BS surveys. But there are disputes over who will get what share and cases are pending.

"Due to several cases over the land, it was under the supervision of the state. Before settlement of the dispute, this land cannot be sold," said one of the owners of plot No 838, on condition of anonymity.

As per the Transfer of Property Act-1882, such disputed land cannot be sold or transferred by any party.

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SOON TO BE SHADOWED

This view of Raju Bhaskarja on Dhaka University campus shows structures of Metro Rail closing in on the iconic sculpture. It seems that when completed, Metro Rail lines will go directly over the sculpture. DU students had protested the construction of the lines through the campus to preserve its beauty.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Suu Kyi's party claims landslide win

Dhaka optimistic of repatriation talks resumption

AGENCIES

Myanmar's ruling party yesterday said it had won enough seats in parliament to form the next government, after reporting a lead based on its unofficial count of votes from the country's second general election since the end of strict military rule.

Party spokesman Myo Nyunt told Reuters internal reports showed the National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Aung San Suu Kyi, had won the 322 seats in parliament needed, though no official results had been announced by the election commission.

Up for grabs in the election are 315 seats in the 425-member lower house and 161 seats in the 217-seat upper house of parliament. The Election Commission was expected to announce official results later yesterday.

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Nurture tolerance, show respect

President urges political parties while addressing special JS session convened over Mujib Borsho; Hasina becomes first PM to bring resolution for discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid yesterday told parliament that political parties will have to nurture the culture of tolerance, show mutual respect and give importance to others' views to give institutional shape to democracy.

"Getting imbued with the spirit of 1971, we shall have to build up resistance against those who seek to hinder advancement in the country through confusion-mongering and derauling the simple-minded people of this land by denying the reality and concocting imaginary stories and situations," he said.

"Only then would the 'Golden Bangla' as dreamt by Bangabandhu materialise, and the celebrations of his birth centenary become meaningful," he said. He also said, "The unity that brought us together in 1971, that unity has to be forged against



communalism, undemocratic behaviour and violence."

The president was delivering his speech in a special parliament session that began on Sunday. The session was convened over Mujib Borsho, marking the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

This was the first time the Jatiya Sangsad went into such a special session in its history, according to sources at the parliament secretariat. The special session was scheduled to be held on March 22, but was postponed following the coronavirus outbreak.

Earlier, parliament went into special sittings on two occasions on January 31 and June 18 in 1974. On both the occasions, the JS was in session and was addressed by then Yugoslav president Marshal Josip Broz Tito and Indian president VV Giri.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

'I implore you to wear a mask'

Says president-elect Biden as he convenes pandemic task force; defiant Trump fires Pentagon chief

AGENCIES

US president-elect Joe Biden yesterday convened a task force to devise a blueprint for tackling the coronavirus crisis imploring Americans to wear protective masks, while President Donald Trump pursues several long-shot gambits to hold on to his job and fired Secretary of Defense Mark Esper.

"We could save tens of thousands of lives if everyone would just wear a mask for the next few months. Not Democratic or Republican lives. American lives," Biden told reporters in Wilmington, Delaware. "I implore you to wear a mask. Do it for yourself. Do it for your neighbor. A mask is not a political statement."

The pandemic has killed more than 237,000 Americans and thrown millions out of work. Biden spoke two days after clinching election victory over Trump.

Biden, set to take office on Jan 20, conferred by video with his 13-member task force, headed by former US



SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Land mutation in 8 days now

Cabinet clears the way for the process to go digital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday cleared a proposal on land registration and mutation, aiming to reduce people's sufferings, make the entire process easier and stop corrupt practices.

From now on, land mutation will be automatically completed online through a software within eight days of registration.

The sub-registrar's office under the law ministry is responsible for land registration while the AC (assistant commissioner) land office under the land ministry oversees land mutation.

"An interoperability software will bridge the [two] offices," Cabinet Secretary Khandaker Anwarul Islam said at a briefing after a cabinet meeting at the secretariat.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presided over the meeting. She joined it virtually from the Gono Bhaban.

Terming the proposal's approval a landmark decision, Anwarul said, "It will bring great relief to all... It will reduce mutation time and backlog of land-related cases."

In reply to a query, he said the new system is already in place in 17 upazilas including Savar. It will be expanded throughout the country within a year.

"Work has been going on for many days. The prime minister has been giving

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



People of different ages doing aerobic exercises in the city's Hatirjheel area around 6:30am yesterday. This is a regular sight as winter approaches and city dwellers strive to remain healthy, but this year the Covid-19 pandemic poses a threat. The people seen in this picture -- including older people deemed most vulnerable to the virus -- have not taken the precaution of wearing masks.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SI Akbar held near border

Police say they detained him; video clips on social media show Khasi people captured him



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Suspended sub-inspector Akbar Hossain Bhuiyan, the prime suspect in the killing of Rayhan in police custody in Sylhet, was detained along Bangladesh-India border in Dona area of the district's Kanaighat upazila around 9:00am yesterday.

At a press conference in the evening, Mohammad Farid Uddin, superintendent of police in Sylhet, said one of their teams detained Akbar while he was fleeing to India.

But in several video clips that went viral on Facebook yesterday, it appeared that Akbar was detained by the people of the Khasi community in India's Meghalaya before he was handed to a Bangladeshi

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**BANGLADESH
UPDATE**



1,683
New cases in 24hrs



4,21,921
Total cases



6,092
Deaths



3,39,768
Recoveries

**GLOBAL
UPDATE**



1,266,079
Deaths



51,041,400
Total cases

US-Bangladesh ties might strengthen with Biden in office

Experts say

PORIMOL PAIMA

The US-Bangladesh relations might get stronger with Joe Biden in the office, foreign affairs analysts have said.

The experts however said Dhaka needs to address its shortcomings in governance and human rights, the two issues that the new US administration will focus on globally.

They said Biden, a seasoned politician with vast knowledge on global affairs, intends to ease relations with countries with which the relations became strained under the Trump administration.

Biden has pledged to re-enter the Paris Agreement on climate change and reverse the withdrawal from the WHO -- both steps taken under the Trump administration.

Under Donald Trump, the US had also begun a tough trade war against China.

Analysts said when the world will be reasonably stable, Bangladesh, a growing economy striving to expand its global reach and seeking to address regional issues like the Rohingya crisis, can effectively work towards its objectives.

Crucial areas where Bangladesh can expect positive outcomes include the coronavirus pandemic, climate change, Rohingya crisis and easing the US's rules to facilitate the passage of a greater number of Bangladeshis immigrants to the US, they said.

ADDRESSING COVID-19 AND CLIMATE CHANGE

"Apart from handling it [the pandemic] better in the USA, he [Biden] is also likely to take a leadership role globally towards this end," said M Humayun Kabir, former Bangladesh ambassador to the US.

If the US returns to the WHO, questions over China's expanding role in the UN body will be addressed, he said.

Prof Imtiaz Ahmed of International Relations Department of Dhaka University said Bangladesh, as a WHO member, might benefit in terms of vaccine accessibility.

Prof Imtiaz said Biden's vision for a greener world is good news for Bangladesh, which is at the forefront of climate change.

The country, which faces threats of salinity intrusion, inundation of large coastal areas and displacement of millions of people, should get support from the US and other industrial countries for adaptation.

Besides, promotion of renewable energy in the US and elsewhere means a reduction in carbon emission and its fallout, said M Humayun Kabir, also chairman of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute.

ROHINGYA REPATRIATION

Since the influx of some 750,000 Rohingya refugees following the brutal military campaign in Myanmar's Rakhine State, there has been little headway in the issue due to an absence of effective measures from the international community.

Humayun Kabir thought neither China nor the US put enough pressure on Myanmar, fearing perhaps the country would be driven closer to one of the two superpowers.

Trump had not attached much importance to it. However, the issue is likely to get sufficient attention from the Biden administration, which may try to handle the trade war against China in a manner other than building an alliance against the nation, he said.

"The Democrats have always been vocal against genocide and crimes against humanity. Biden is very likely to be strong in raising the Rohingya issue and seek a resolve," said Prof Imtiaz Ahmed.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Analysts said US engagements with Bangladesh have increased recently. Holding of comprehensive economic partnership dialogues, signing of an open sky deal between and US Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun's visit in October are all signs of that.

Bangladesh's political stability, continued growth, skilled workforce, rising middle class, improved infrastructure and connectivity, geostrategic location between South and Southeast Asia and handling of the coronavirus pandemic are all factors the US has noticed.

"Therefore, US companies are interested in investments in Bangladesh," said Prof Imtiaz Ahmed.

Both experts said Bangladesh really needs to work sincerely to improve the climate for investment by removing bottlenecks -- either bureaucratic red tape or taxation, or both.

"The blue economy especially is an area where US companies can come in and explore," Humayun Kabir said.

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Both experts said Biden, unlike Trump, will be vocal on democracy, human rights and labour rights, which is why it is important for Bangladesh to improve on those fronts.

"It is not that we will do it for America, but for ourselves. The US will then have less scope to speak on such issues and we can draw investments," said Prof Imtiaz.

He said the US will be strengthening its relations with India, but is also likely to raise voice on India's National Register of Citizenship and Citizenship Amendment Act -- an issue that generated some level of disquiet within Bangladesh.

Nurture tolerance, show respect

FROM PAGE 1

During yesterday's proceedings, Hamid pointed out in brief the successes of Sheikh Hasina's government in different areas, especially the government's tackling of the pandemic.

Reflecting on the life of Bangabandhu, he said there was no scope for looking at Bangabandhu and Bangladesh separately. One has to know about Bangabandhu in order to know about Bangladesh, the struggle of the Bangalees for freedom, and the Liberation War in 1971.

"Those who tried to look at these two phenomena separately have failed. Today's reality is the biggest proof of that," he said.

Saying that the Father of the Nation had a huge heart, Hamid said, "His confidence, love and faith in his countrymen were infinite. He repaid the love of the people of Bangla by sacrificing his own life. He has made the Bangalee nation indebted to him."

The president said Bangabandhu always got himself involved in helping others and ameliorating their sorrows. "Instead of bothering about his own happiness and sorrow, he used to worry about others. That was the beginning. He started protesting whenever he saw injustices, exploitations and repressions. He never became confined within his own self or the domain of his family.

"Even while standing on the gallows, he sang the victory-song of Bangla, the Bangalees and Bangladesh. He was unwavering and resolute even when he learnt that his grave was being dug beside the condemned cell."

Hamid also said Bangabandhu had participated in anti-British rallies and gatherings at the age of only 14. Personal and family bondages could never become a hindrance to the political pursuits of Bangabandhu.

Saying that Bangabandhu used to attach highest priority to the proceedings of the constituent assembly, Hamid said there were no opposition parties in the assembly, and the number of opposition members was less than 10 when all parties and independents were combined.

"But the opposition members were quite vocal and used to get sufficient time for placing their arguments. The parliamentary sessions were quite lively. The arguments, debates and presentations of views were very

attractive.

"Bangabandhu used to attach much importance to the opinions of opposition members in all the proceedings of parliament."

He added, "There was also another notable feature of that parliament. The Speaker was embarrassed when anyone spoke against Bangabandhu in parliament, but Bangabandhu did not show such an emotion. This could not be imagined if one was not liberal and democracy-minded.

"However divergent the political ideologies might have been, Bangabandhu never cast any aspersion on the opposition leaders. Rather, he spoke by showing due honour for them. Political courtesy was a notable feature of his life."

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is not merely a name, Bangabandhu is an institution, an entity, a history, Hamid said, adding that an invisible Bangabandhu is much more powerful than a living Bangabandhu.

After a break of about 15 minutes following the president's speech, the JS proceedings resumed when Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina brought a resolution under section 147 of the rules of procedure of parliament paving the way for discussion on the political life, work and philosophy of Bangabandhu to pay tributes to him marking Mujib Borsho.

While placing the resolution, Hasina described various aspects of Bangabandhu's life and work and his sacrifice for the Bangalee nation throughout his life.

This was for the first time any prime minister brought any resolution in parliament for discussion, sources at the parliament secretariat told The Daily Star.

Following placing of the resolution, Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, who was presiding over the sitting, urged Awami League General Secretary and Roads, Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader to take part in the discussion. Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, ruling AL MP Asaduzzaman Noor, Gonoforum MP Sultan Muhammed Mansur Ahmed, among others, participated in the discussion.

Discussion on the resolution will be held for four days.



Following months of closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the area surrounding the capital's New Market have taken on the appearance of old. Hawkers have taken over the pavement and crowds of pedestrians on the road and the sidewalk leave little space for social distancing. This photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

The mayoral mechanism

FROM PAGE 1

The owners in 1986 filed partition suits with the Joint Session Judge's Court in Cox's Bazar, which a few years later appointed a receiver -- assistant commissioner (land) of the upazila concerned -- for the land until the suits are resolved.

Despite all this, mayor's wife Farhana Akhtar and his brother-in-law Mizanur Rahman were able to sell eight plots from the disputed land to the land acquisition office.

After the land acquisition began, the owners also moved the High Court on December 19, 2019.

"Those who claim they purchased the land could not show any papers proving that we had sold our land to them, when we went to the High Court protesting the irregularity," said the owner, taking to this newspaper.

An investigation by The Daily Star has uncovered massive irregularities in the land acquisition process that implicates the mayor himself, in addition to various officials from the land acquisition office.

BEGINNING OF THE SCAM

The municipality acquired a total of 2,1750 acres of land in Rubber Dam area of Jhilonggha at 11 times the cost of another site proposed for the project. The Daily Star has documents that confirm 1.171 acres of it was acquired from Farhana and Mizan.

In a letter sent by the then mayor Sarwar Kamal on April 19, 2015 to Md Abdul Halim Khan, project director at the Department of Public Health Engineering, two sites were proposed -- one at PM Khali and the second at Jhilonggha.

The letter stated that two acres of land at Jhilonggha would cost Tk 11 crore 23 lakh, while the same area of land at PM Khali would cost Tk 1 crore 23 lakh.

Despite the huge discrepancy in costs, Mujibor Rahman started to lobby for the site in Jhilonggha after he assumed office in August 2018.

As per the minutes of a meeting held at Cox's Bazar office of the Department of Public Health Engineering on May 14, 2019, he urged Abdul Halim Khan to speed up the process to acquire the land at Jhilonggha.

"As water table is receding fast in Cox's Bazar, I request to accelerate the steps to implement the project at Jhilonggha mouja," he said.

In a letter signed by the mayor and sent to the project director at the Department of Public Health Engineering on June 13, 2019, the price per decimal of land was shown to be Tk 5,57,236, several times higher than the market price.

As per the land acquisition rules, the owner gets three times the original rate when the land is acquired and that's how the price for 1.171 acres finally stood at Tk 36 crore.

RECOMMENDATION AFTER VISIT

Following a proposal for acquisition from Cox's Bazar Municipality on July 17, 2019, the district administration sent a team led by the upazila nirbahi officer of Cox's Bazar Sadar upazila, the land acquisition officer of the district and the assistant commissioner (land) of the upazila to visit the site and review all relevant documents on September 16, 2019.

Later in the same month, Ashraful Afsar, the then additional deputy commissioner (revenue), also visited the spot, and recommended the land for acquisition, overlooking the legal issues.

They did not even explore the alternative site for the project.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of the minutes of a district land allocation committee meeting held at the DC office on September 30 last year.

The meeting minutes show that additional deputy commissioner (revenue) wrote to Deputy Commissioner Kamal Hossein, recommending the land be acquired for the project.

"The ADC (revenue) forwarded his recommendation to facilitate the acquisition. The papers relating to the land were found correct. In the presence of all parties a unanimous decision to acquire 2.1750 acres of land at Jhilonggha mouja is taken," concludes the meeting minutes, which was signed by the DC.

MYSTERIOUS MUTATION

Mayor Mujibor Rahman proposed the site for acquisition in a letter sent to the Cox's Bazar DC on July 17, 2019.

Using his clout, he had the land mutation done on October 2, 2019, recording the names of Farhana and Mizan as the owners, according to land documents and land office sources.

As per the land acquisition order sheet, the office concerned issued a notice for the acquisition on October 28, 2019.

The land office of Cox's Bazar Sadar upazila mutated the land knowing all legal issues involved. The original owners lodged complaints with the ADC (revenue) against the mutation a few days after the mutation.

But the ADC (revenue) did not dispose of the complaints. Rather, he released a cheque for Farhana and Mizan.

The district land allocation committee headed by DC Kamal Hossein was aware of the disputes surrounding the land acquired, according to the order sheet, which contains all information from the land acquisition to settlement of acquisition.

The order sheet prepared by the district administration, in fact, mentions the reservations about the land acquisition procedure.

"Four reservations were found so far -- between October 27 and November 18 [a period in 2019 during which the district administration asked people to raise complaints, if any]. They [claimants] requested that the land not be acquired as there are multiple claims on the land," says the order sheet.

Shah Alam, a claimant of a disputed plot, told The Daily Star that his family filed a case for the land to be partitioned off among the claimants in 1986. Since then, the court had appointed the assistant commissioner (land) of their upazila as a custodian of the land.

"I received a notice in October last year that the government wants to acquire the land. But to my utter shock, I learnt that the ownership of the land had been transferred to another party. But being a disputed land, there is no scope for anybody to mutate or register

the land as per the acquisition law," he said.

"I lodged a complaint with the district administration against the mutation and filed a writ with the High Court, which ordered disposal of the issue within 30 days. Following the order, they included me in the registrar but are procrastinating over the payment for the last seven months."

Official sources said the land acquisition office has already released Tk 8 crore to Farhana and Mizan and the process to release another 28 crore got slowed down due to an Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) investigation.

Contacted on October 24, DC Kamal Hossein said he can't make any comment without going through the order sheet.

When told that the order sheet mentions reservations about the land acquisition, he said there were about 75 big and small projects in his area and "I can't say anything without seeing the papers".

"I am giving you the phone number of my official concerned; you better talk to him," he said and hung up the call.

This correspondent never got that number.

Muhammad Shahriar Muktar, assistant commissioner (land) of Cox's Bazar Sadar, told The Daily Star earlier that he was not aware of any legal prohibition in mutating that land.

When this correspondent reminded him of the cases over the acquired land, he cut short the conversation, saying, "Sorry, the case is under ACC investigation. I can't say anything further."

Shamim Hasan, land acquisition officer in charge of the acquisition, who had told the administration after visiting the site that there was no dispute over the land, said, "The law does not allow me to talk to the media without permission of my superior."

Asked how the Tk 8 crore was released despite a dispute over the land, former ADC (revenue) Ashraful Afsar, said, "As far as I know if there is any reservation or case over the land, the payment won't be released. I have to investigate the matter."

Recently, Afsar has been promoted to deputy secretary of science and technology ministry.

SOURCE OF MONEY?

Mizan, brother-in-law of Mayor Mujibor, hung up the phone call when this correspondent introduced himself as a journalist.

Mujibor, as a mayoral candidate, had submitted an affidavit on June 24, 2018 to the Election Commission, where his wife's profession was listed as that of homemaker.

In just two years, Farhana and her brother bought 63 decimals from the disputed land spending Tk 2,75,94,000, according to one sale deed obtained by this newspaper.

It raises the question how she and her brother, who is known to have no fixed job, managed to earn so much money.

Mujibor had shown Tk 3,00,809 as cash in his hand in his affidavit.

The Daily Star could not get his comment as both his phones were found switched off for the last 15 days. His wife also could not be reached for comments.

Land mutation in 8 days now

FROM PAGE 1

us directives to reduce time and prevent harassment [of people] during land registration and mutation."

He mentioned that delay in land registration and mutation occurs as the work is carried out by two different offices under two ministries. But now they will be linked through the interoperable software and be able to share the database.

The cabinet secretary said AC land offices across the country now have 4.3 crore digital records of rights or Khatiyon.

Khatiyon is a document prepared through survey for determining possession, ownership and assessment of land development tax.

In the past, anyone could get a plot of land registered in his or her name at the sub-registrar's office without confirmation from the AC land office. Now, the sub-registrar's office will register land after getting confirmation from the AC land office through the software.

If a person goes to the sub-registrar's

office for registration of a plot of land, the sub-registrar will not register it immediately. The official will check the status of the record of rights regarding the plot of land. A notification will then be sent to the AC land who will scrutinise whether the application for registration is valid and send reply accordingly as early as possible, Anwarul said, adding that the AC land will complete mutation within eight days of registration.

From now on, a land owner will have to submit two copies of the deed to AC land and sub-registrar's offices. Previously, a land owner had to submit one copy of the deed to the sub-registrar's office.

"Since the AC land will have both the deed and land transfer notice from the sub-registrar's office, the official will not need anything else and will complete land mutation through the software," said the secretary.

He also mentioned that a Tk 2,000-crore project has been taken up to archive all documents of land registration and mutation.

The secretary further said the AC land offices across the country failed to update records on ownership of 50-60 percent plots of land. Now the offices, which will be able to update records based on online database, have to prepare monthly reports in this regard.

Anwarul said the issue of land inheritance has also been incorporated in the software.

"The prime minister has given directives to protect the rights of transgender people in case of land inheritance."

When his attention was drawn to bribe allegations against a section of officials at sub-registrar's offices, he said, "Now there is no such scope [for corruption] ... The new system will right away reduce corruption by around 75 percent."

"According to our estimate, 75 percent of the lawsuits are filed over land dispute. Once this new system comes into effect, the number of cases will decrease by 50 percent," he added.

25 more die, 1,683 test positive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of deaths due to Covid-19 rose as the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) yesterday reported 25 single-day deaths in the past 24 hours till 8:00am.

Over the last one week, the daily death toll was below 20 except the 21 deaths on Wednesday, according to DGHS data.

Since October 13, this is the highest single-day casualties, except the second day of November when the number was the same, due to the highly transmissible virus.

Around 31 people died of Covid-19 on October 12.

With the latest figure, deaths due to Covid-19 rose to 6,092, which was 1.44 percent of all confirmed cases, according to the yesterday's press release from the DGHS.

In the same 24 hours, meanwhile, a total of 1,683 people tested positive for the viral infection surging the total number of case to 4,21,921.

Besides, the recovery count rose to 3,39,768 after another 1,623 patients were discharged from the hospitals during the same period.

Against a total of 14,042 tests in those 24 hours in 115 Covid-19 testing laboratories, the positivity rate was almost 12 percent (11.99 percent) -- which indicates further rise of infection.

The overall positivity rate was 17.17 percent.

Meanwhile, a total of 1,623 Covid-19 patients were added to the recovery list, raising the total number of recoveries to 339,768.

This is more than 80 percent of all confirmed cases, according to the press release.

Of the deceased yesterday, 17 were males and eight were females.

All of them died in hospitals.

One was aged between 11 and 20, one between 21 and 30, one between 31 and 40, two between 41 and 50, nine between 51 and 60, and the rest 11 were above 60 years.

SI Akbar held

FROM PAGE 1

citizen in Kanaighat.

Contacted, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) officials also said Akbar was detained by locals in India.

When reporters at the press conference asked the SP about the videos, he said Akbar was detained under direct supervision of police and some trusted friends helped them catch him.

"We take help from the general public and such friends have helped us," he said without specifying much.

Akbar will soon be handed over to the PBI, which is investigating the case, the SP said.

Sylhet Range Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Mofiz Uddin Ahmed said, "Sub-inspector Akbar will face prosecution for the heinous crime he has committed and no one's above the law."

PBI Special Superintendent Muhammad Khaled-uz-Zaman told The Daily Star, "Akbar was in India and was detained by the Khasi people near the border area. They then handed him over to the police."

Contacted, BGB Battalion-19 Commanding Officer Lt Col Sayeed Hossain said, "We came to know that Akbar was in Shilchar of Assam for a while. Once he came to Meghalaya, he was detained by the Khasi community people."

"After detaining him, Khasi people contacted one Abdur Rahim, a resident of Kanaighat, who received Akbar from the Khasi people on the border. Rahim then contacted police and handed him over."

Rayhan, a 33-year-old resident of Akhalia Neharipara area in Sylhet city, was allegedly detained and tortured by police on October 11.

He died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital at 7:50am. His wife filed a case with Kotwali Police Station accusing several unnamed people the next day.

On October 12, Sylhet Metropolitan Police suspended four personnel including sub-inspector Akbar, who was the in-charge of a police outpost.

On October 13, PBI was tasked with the investigation of the case. Until yesterday, an assistant sub-inspector and two constables were arrested in the case. 'SENIOR OFFICER ASKED ME TO FLEE' Akbar fled from his workplace the day he got suspended.

"I was suspended, I could be arrested, and a senior officer told me to run away. The officer told me to come back two months later when everything would settle down," Akbar was seen saying in one of the viral clips.

"Rayhan was arrested for mugging. I had not beat him up alone. Seven or eight other policemen also beat him up," he said, adding that he fled to India via Bhologanj area of Companiganj.

After Akbar's detention, Rayhan's mother Salma Begum said that the case should be handed over to Rab for better investigation.

Thanking the Khasi community, she said, "Police failed to detain him. All I want is justice. If I see Akbar being punished for what he did to my son, I will be able to sleep in peace."



Most of those who were burnt on Sunday night's fire incident at Chattogram city's North Kattoli were in critical condition, according to physicians. Family members took them to Dhaka for better treatment, after they were rushed to the burn unit of Chattogram Medical College Hospital.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



Noor Hossain Day today

CITY DESK

Shaheed Noor Hossain Day, a red-letter day in restoration of democracy in Bangladesh, is being observed today.

On this day in 1987, Noor Hossain, who imprinted his bare chest and back with the slogan "Swaichar nipat jak, gonotatra mukti pak" (down with autocracy, let democracy be freed), was gunned down when police opened fire on an anti-autocracy demonstration in Dhaka's Zero Point.

The place was renamed "Noor Hossain Chatter".

The martyrdom of Noor Hossain and others during the mass upsurge of late 1990s expedited the anti-

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

A forgone mandate

Two Dhaka city corporations' food inspection activities virtually non-existent

MATHEWS CHIRAN

The two Dhaka city corporations have the mandate of keeping a check on food safety, but have been doing next to nothing to this end for several years.

They have facilities like a dedicated food testing lab, a court for filing food safety-related cases, and food inspectors, but data show collection of food samples for testing is abysmal and highly irregular in both city corporations.

While Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) has been collecting samples at fluctuating consistency every year, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) has not collected anything for the last three years.

There are 17 food inspectors, known as sanitary officers (SI) at the two city corporations -- nine at DNCC and eight at DSCC -- for collecting samples such as dairy products, cookies and beverages. They are also responsible for inspecting restaurants.

After collecting samples, they are supposed to send them to the Modern Food Testing Laboratory and Training Centre. If any sample fails tests, staffers are authorised to file case with DSCC's Pure Food Court against the manufacturing company.

But there is virtually no implementation of this process. In 2018, neither city corporations collected any sample, and since then, DSCC has collected 130 (up till September 2020) while DNCC has collected zilch.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

One dies, eight hurt in Ctg building fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An elderly woman died and eight, including six members of a family, suffered burn injuries in a fire at a six-storey building in Chattogram city on Sunday night.

Peyara Begum (65), who suffered 60 percent burns, succumbed to her injuries at the burn unit of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) around 12:45pm yesterday.

The six injured -- Peyara's son Mijanur Rahman (42), daughter-in-law Bibi Sultana (30), grandson Mahir (7), granddaughter Manha (2); other son Saiful Islam (20) and daughter Sumaya Akhter (18) -- were admitted to the burn unit. Family members decided to take them to Dhaka for better treatment in the afternoon, said Dr Rafiq Uddin Ahmed, head of the CMCH burn unit, adding that condition of most of the injured was critical.

Two other injured -- Riajul Islam (22)

and his wife Salma Jahan (21) -- used to sublet a room at Mijanur's flat, said OC Jahir Hossain of Akbar Shah Police Station.

The fire broke out at Mijanur's flat on the top floor of "Momtaj Villa" in North Kattoli area around 9:30pm, the OC added.

Mijanur, a service holder at a private company, used to stay alone. So he sublet the room to the couple. His wife, a primary school teacher at Dagonbhuiyan upazila in Feni, and other family members who live in their village home in Feni, came to visit him a few weeks back, said the OC.

The cause of the fire was yet to be known, the OC said, adding that Fire Service and Civil Defence and Power Development Board are investigating the incident.

A duty officer at the divisional headquarters of fire service at Agrabad said the fire was extinguished before their team reached the spot. Fire service suspects that the fire originated from an electric short circuit, the officer said.

DRIVE IN KHULNA CITY

33 detained, 25 fined for not wearing masks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Around 33 people were detained by two mobile courts for violating health guidelines in Khulna yesterday.

The mobile courts also fined 25 people Tk 17,000 during the drives conducted in four areas including Shibbari Mor and in front of court building in the city.

Yusuf Ali, additional district magistrate of Khulna District Administration, told The Daily Star strict measures have been taken to prevent the second wave of Covid-19.

"We detained people who did not wear masks outdoors in city areas. We kept around 15 people in police custody as they could not provide logical answers to why they did not wear masks, and handed over 12 to 14 children to guardians," he said, adding, "We will fine the detainees and release them today after taking their undertaking."

According to the decision of the district law and order committee meeting on Sunday, people who do not wear masks outside will be punished. Khulna Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate Mohammad Helal Hossain presided over the meeting.

Ex-husband throws acid on woman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man allegedly threw acid on his ex-wife, an employee at a hospital in the capital, yesterday morning.

As the victim, Rahima Begum (45), a medical assistant at Birdem hospital's Mirpur branch, was leaving the hospital around 6:30am after night duty, her ex-husband Abdul Ali threw acid on her and fled, the victim said.

She was later rescued and admitted to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

Dr Partha Sankar Paul, a resident surgeon there, said she had 12 percent burns on her body, including her face.

According to the victim's family members, Rahima, hailing from Dinajpur's Biral upazila and resident of Kalyanpur's Natun Bazar area, got divorced from Ali three months back.

Yesterday, Ali, helper of a truck driver, met Rahima and threatened her with dire consequences if she does not return to him. She expressed unwillingness to do so, said Miraj Hossain, husband of the victim's sister.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

39pc migrant workers' families had no income from April-June: study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-nine percent of the migrant workers' families had no income during April, May and June in the country this year, although there were no families that had no income till November 2019, said speakers citing a recent survey at a webinar yesterday.

The survey -- conducted by Karmojibi Nari, Manusher Jonno Foundation and UK Aid, also revealed that although before Covid-19, the monthly income of a migrant worker was on an average Tk 47,272, it came down to Tk 9,361 after the coronavirus situation emerged, says a press release.

The findings were presented at an online seminar, titled "Covid-19: Safe migration, fact findings on migrant workers' acquirements and deprivation, and ways to reintegration", organised by Karmojibi Nari and supported by MJF and UK Aid.

The survey focused on the impact of Covid-19 on migrant workers and it was conducted with 383 migrant workers (155 women and 228 men), aged between 21 and 50, in 3 districts -- Dhaka, Mymensingh and Narsingdi. The workers participating in the study were involved in a total of 55 occupations.

Speakers at the meeting made recommendations on a variety of issues. According to them, these workers need to be provided with jobs and loans on easy terms to survive and special initiatives should be taken by the government to monitor the stimulus package provided by the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

ASI among 2 held with yaba in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons including a police official were arrested with yaba tablets in the capital's Gendaria area on Sunday night.

Members of Rapid Action Battalion-10 arrested Abdul Aziz, assistant sub-inspector (ASI) of Jatrabari Police Station, and one Abdur Razzak with 148 yaba tablets in the area, Saiju Mia, officer-in-charge of Gendaria Police Station, told The Daily Star.

Later, Rab members handed the duo over to Gendaria police and filed a case under the Narcotics Control Act around 8pm, the OC said.

They will be produced before a Dhaka court soon, he added.



PHOTO COURTESY: WANDER WOMAN

A traveller dresses up in a sari for the perfect photo-op at Saint Martin's island, with the setting sun in the background and waves crashing at her feet.

Travelling made better for women, by women

MEHRIN MUDDI CHOWDHURY, Star Lifestyle

There are many words for it. "Wanderlust", "hodophile" or "bhromon-pipashu" -- are only some of the things we call those of us who harbour a strong desire to travel.

But then not all of us get to tick-off all the entries from our wish-lists. Travelling isn't as easy as it seems. There's scheduling, paperwork, savings and a lot of other variables to take care of before one can travel.

But there's another factor that's perhaps a little different from the others -- gender.

Even in 2020, it's difficult for a woman to travel. Stigma is there -- "Women can't travel alone" or "Women can't travel without a male guardian accompanying them" -- and so is fear for personal safety.

This is where Wander Women comes in. It's a travel organisation that facilitates travelling for Bangladeshi women. It's services and solutions are specifically crafted for its female customers.

"University years got me into travelling. I used to attend a lot of international competitions, and I developed a taste out of these trips," said Sabira Mehrin, founder and lead traveller at Wander Women.

"But it was hurdle as I graduated and joined the workforce," Mehrin continued. "I had to do everything on my own -- from arranging funds to finding suitable locations."

"Sensing a gap in the travelling market, I decided to start Wander Women. My friends encouraged me to start small, first with a Facebook group and scale up from there," she recounted the early days. "Thankfully, I listened! Since the first post on social media back in 2017, we never had to look back!"

Something of a by-product that comes out of Wander Women's services is how it provides female travellers with a network of like-minded travelmates. This acquaintance comes in handy when friends and family cannot match schedule.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

'DEROGATORY FACEBOOK COMMENTS'

Suman, Ishrat challenge contempt of court ruling

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Supreme Court lawyers yesterday filed a petition with the Appellate Division of the SC, challenging the contempt of court rule issued by the HC against them for allegedly posting derogatory comments about the judiciary on Facebook.

Syed Sayedul Haque Suman and Ishrat Hasan submitted the petition through their lawyer Aneek R Haque, also seeking a stay on a High Court verdict that upheld the Bangladesh Bar Council decision allowing a Jumman Siddique to practise law in court although he failed the enrolment test.

The petitioners sought a stay on the HC order that summoned them to appear before it in person on November 16 to place their explanations on this issue and imposed a cost of Tk 100 on each of them.

Lawyer Aneek R Haque told The Daily Star that the apex court chamber judge may hold hearing on the stay petition today.

On November 8, the HC issued a contempt of court rule against Sayedul and Ishrat, where it asked them to explain why contempt of court proceedings should not be initiated against them for their Facebook comments.

The HC bench of Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore and Justice Mohammad Ullah came up with the rule and summons order.

During hearing on the writ petition on November 8, Jumman Siddique's lawyer Tania Amir brought the Facebook comments made by Sayedul and Ishrat before the HC bench and prayed for necessary order.

Following the same writ petition, another High Court bench on December 18 last year stayed the effectiveness of the Bar Council notification that allowed Jumman to practice law although he failed in the enrolment test.

The bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir Lytton also issued a rule asking the Bangladesh Bar Council and government

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



No matter how much automation is introduced in the capital's traffic system, it seems to have little to no effect on vehicular and pedestrian movement. Due to citizens' unwillingness to follow rules, sergeants still manually direct traffic, and these "useless" lights gradually fall apart and just stand there, waiting to be repaired, inset. The photos were taken yesterday from the capital's Bailey Road.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Will make sure project money is not wasted: Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said they do not want wastage of money in any project of the city corporation.



He also stressed on proper implementation of the project money.

Taposh made the comment while delivering his speech at a meeting in Nagar Bhaban on "Livelihood Improvement of Urban Poor Community Project".

The mayor said they will make sure that there is no wastage of project money. He sought help from the councillors in this regard.

There are many government projects where even though the entire budget was not used, it was shown as expenditure, he said.

The prime minister has been irked by such incidents, said Taposh.

Talking about the urban poor, the mayor said, "We have to improve their living standards through this project." He also said they will work towards bringing down the number of poor people living in the city to under 10 percent.

The meeting was chaired by DSCC Secretary Akramuzzaman.

GRAFT CASE

Barishal ex-mayor jailed for 7 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Former Barishal City Corporation mayor Ahsan Habib Kamal and four others were yesterday sentenced to seven years in prison in a corruption case filed over embezzlement of Tk 45 lakh.

Barishal Divisional Special Judge Mohsinul Haque handed down the verdict in presence of the accused.

The court also fined Kamal, former fisheries affairs secretary of BNP central committee, and one Zakir Hossain, a contractor, Tk 1 crore each.

The three other convicts are Md Ishahak, former executive engineer of Barishal municipality; Khan Nurul Islam, former assistant engineer of the municipality and current supervising engineer of the city corporation; and Abdus Sattar, former deputy assistant engineer of the municipality.

Abdul Baset, the then district officer of Anti-Corruption Corporation, filed the case against them with Kotwali Model Police Station on October 11, 2000.

He said the accused were in charge of Barisal municipality at the time of the incident. Kamal and others embezzled the money in name of repairing roads and recruiting fake contractors for the work, he said in the case statement.

On July 19, 2011, ACC assistant director MH Rahmatullah filed the charge sheet against the accused.

Yesterday, Advocate Masudul Haque Khan represented the state while Advocate Mannan Akon, Advocate Mujibur Rahman Nantu and Advocate Saeed Ahmed Madhu appeared for the accused. After the verdict, the accused were sent to Barishal Central Jail.

Meanwhile, a tense situation was created in the court area after the verdict. BNP-backed lawyers demonstrated on the premises, demanding Kamal's release.

Law enforcers eventually brought the situation under control.



Buyers queue up to buy groceries from a Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) truck in the capital's Motijheel. The open market sales come at a cheaper price than market rates, but every buyer can also get only a fixed maximum amount. This is why staffers carefully weigh items such as lentils for each purchase. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

A forgone

FROM PAGE 3

Wishing anonymity, some officials said the current scenario is because of there being no target for sample collection. There is no monthly requirement for inspecting restaurants or hotels to check hygiene.

"We also can't perform our main work because we are often assigned to accompany mosquito drives or carry out other work," said a sanitary inspector of DSCC, wishing not to be named.

A sanitary inspector of DNCC told this correspondent, "Whenever we collect samples, we must pay for the products out of our pockets, and the authority doesn't want to reimburse us. Besides, we also must spend our own money while filing cases and for transport."

"Therefore, sanitary inspectors are not incentivised to collect samples," he added.

Experts concerned with food safety say sample collection is unsatisfactory, and authorities must seriously monitor this issue. With product volume increasing, testing should have ramped up as well.

Former Food Safety Authority Chairperson Mahfuzur Rahman said, "Sample collection is very low when the market and city's area is considered. At the same time, the inspectors need proper support to execute their duty."

When asked about sample collection or inspection targets, he said since the sanitary inspectors work based on receiving complaints, and city corporation areas often expand, authorities do not set strict targets.

Consumer Association of Bangladesh President Ghulam Rahman said, "All this shows employees' lack of responsibility and inadequate monitoring by authorities. If these issues were taken care of, the sanitary inspectors wouldn't be able to go on without properly executing their duties for three years."

"They should provide an explanation for this. If they can't, necessary action should be taken as per law," he added.

When approached for this matter, DSCC Chief Health Officer Brig Gen Md Sharif Ahmed refused to talk or meet the reporter.

DNCC Deputy Chief Health Officer Lt Col Md Golam Mostofa Sarwar said that a major reason for these issues is workforce crisis. "We have 10 zones and need two sanitary inspectors in each. In total, we need 20 officers but only have nine."

Talking about responsibilities of the officers, he said, "They are supposed to inspect the food market and restaurants, and send samples to the laboratory. However, that is not happening."

"Due to workforce shortage, whenever drives take place, like ones for mosquito control or billboard removal, they have to be present. If Rapid Action Battalion sends requisition for any drive, they have to be there too," he added.

"Since they are often preoccupied with other work, we directed them to send at least one sample to the laboratory monthly," the official said.

He however admitted that DNCC could not monitor the sector properly for the last few years due to being occupied with dengue-related work. Now, they are trying to bring everything under discipline, he added.

Regarding claims of sanitary inspectors paying for samples out of their pockets, Lt Col Sarwar denied it, saying the reimbursement may come late, but they do receive it.

"After buying samples, they can send vouchers to the respective zonal executive officer, and DNCC will reimburse them accordingly. Although they complain of getting late payments, this can't be an excuse," he added.

Travelling

FROM PAGE 3

Besides offering interesting travel destinations, Wander Woman also designs unique plans for its members. There's a petty currency exchange programme, international sim-card exchange facilities, travel cost pre-installment payment options, and more, Mehrin told this correspondent.

"The basic idea is to make travel as easy and as convenient as possible," she said.

But then things hit a stumbling block after the coronavirus put a halt to all its initiatives for most of 2020. However, rather than being bogged down by this, the organisation heard the call of the time and focused on doing philanthropic work, like arranging donations for pandemic affected families. It also undertook another project where over 7,500 women were provided self-defense training for free.

After seven long months of closure, the company finally resumed operations in November. In the meantime, Mehrin won the highly acclaimed Diana Award, but she says she couldn't have done it without the country's people.

"After all, this is an initiative that originated in beautiful Bangladesh," she said.

Follow Star Lifestyle on Facebook and @starlifestyleds on Instagram for more lifestyle related stories.

39pc migrant

FROM PAGE 3

The speakers also suggested providing guarantee of migrant workers' rights by following a bilateral agreement.

Besides, there should be bilateral talks with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, so that those who have been forced to return to the country after Covid-19 can go abroad again and those who are still abroad are not sent back.

The online seminar was presided over by Karmojibi Nari President Dr Pratima Paul Majumder and moderated by Acting Executive Director Sunzida Sultana.

Enayetullah Khan's death anniv today

CITY DESK

Today is the 15th death anniversary of Enayetullah Khan, founding editor of daily New Age and editor-in-chief of weekly Holiday, says a press release.

On this day in 2005, he passed away in Toronto, Canada at the age of 66. He had been suffering from cancer of the pancreas.

Having begun his career as a cub reporter for the then Pakistan Observer in 1959, Enayetullah founded Holiday in August 1965, before taking over as editor in 1966. He founded New Age in June 2003. He was also the editor of the Bangladesh Times between 1975 and 1977. He was also awarded the Ekushey Padak.



Suman

FROM PAGE 3

to explain why the publication of the gazette notification should not be declared illegal.

According to the petition, Jumman failed to secure pass marks in the Bangladesh Bar Council examination. But on October 31 last year, a gazette notification was issued allowing him to practise law for the HC.

On November 8, the HC bench of Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore and Mohammad Ullah rejected the writ petition and upheld the Bar Council's gazette notification.

The HC said in the verdict that Jumman has foreign degree and has experience of practising law at foreign courts and therefore, he can practise at courts concerned in Bangladesh as per relevant law.

Ex-husband

FROM PAGE 3

Days after their divorce, Ali beat up Rahima and took away her salary. She filed a general diary with Mirpur Police Station in this regard, Miraj added.

Mustafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of the police station, said the victim's ex-husband was absconding and the process to arrest him was underway.

Noor

FROM PAGE 3

autocracy movement.

In face of the movement, autocratic ruler HM Ershad had to step down on December 6, 1990.

To mark the day, different socio-cultural and professional organisations, have chalked out programmes.

Medical College for Women & Hospital

(A Project of the Medical & Health Welfare Trust)
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Requirements: (1) Application (2) C.V. (3) Copy of all certificates & degrees (4) Nationality (5) Recent passport size photo -01 copy (6) Pay order/DD - Tk. 700/- in favour of "Medical College for Women & Hospital" from Bangladeshi Citizen. Those who are already in service must apply through proper channel. Departmental candidates will be given preference. Last date for submission of application is **26th November, 2020 at 02:00 PM.**
Interview date will be notified later on.
Application to be submitted : **Executive Chairman, MHWT** **Reza Karim**
Executive Chairman, MHWT

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BIRDEM General Hospital

Notice

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Director Academy, BIRDEM.

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NOTICE FOR INVITING PROPOSALS FROM SHAREHOLDERS FOR APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY AUDITORS FOR THE YEAR 2021

Notice is hereby given to the shareholders of the Company that M/S ACNABIN, Chartered Accountants (an independent member of BAKER TILLY INTERNATIONAL) the existing auditors, who have been serving as auditors of the Company for consecutive three years, are not eligible for re-appointment for the year 2021 as per the notification of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission. Therefore, a new auditor of the Company for the year 2021, other than the existing one, requires to be appointed in the forthcoming 22nd Annual General Meeting of the Company.

In view of the above, proposals for appointment as statutory auditors of the Company for the year 2021 are hereby invited by the shareholders from panel of Auditors of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission so as to reach the same at the registered office of the Company not later than December 05, 2020 along with a consent letter from the proposed auditor (U/S 210 (1) of the Companies Act, 1994) and a declaration to the effect that they are qualified to audit the company with regard to qualification, eligibility and appointment of auditors.

By order of the Board of Directors

Sd/-
(Muhammad Shahidul Islam FCS)
Company Secretary

Dated: Dhaka
November 10, 2020

Rupali Bank Ltd.

Head Office, ICT Systems Division
34, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000
Tel: +88-02-9514940
E-mail: ho-it@rupalibank.org, Website: www.rupalibank.org

Ref. No. HO/ICTSYS/2020/947 Dated: 09/11/2020

Tender is invited by ICT Systems Division, Rupali Bank Limited for procurement of following goods:

Tender No.	Name of work	Last date & time for tender/proposal security submission and price of tender schedule	Tender/ proposal opening time
39/2020	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Central Vault Alarm System at Branch level and interfacing with Central Monitoring System (CMS) at Head Office with Capacity Building of Rupali Bank Limited.	07/12/2020 up to 3:00pm. Tk 5,000/-	07/12/2020 Time: 03:30pm

Tenderer/bidder are required to register first through bidders link of Rupali Bank Ltd. e-Tender System web portal: <http://114.130.43.55> or www.rupalibank.org/etender and then submit the proposed offer through e-Tender System and hard copies of documents (Technical specifications, financial proposal, tender security and original copy of tender schedule) at Establishment & Welfare Division (Tender Box) in a sealed envelope within 07/12/2020 up to 3:00pm.

Md. Rahmatullah Sarker
Deputy General Manager
Rupali Bank Limited
ICT Systems Division (9th Floor)
Head Office, 34, Dilkusha C/A
Dhaka-1000, Phone: 9514940

GD-1793

Criminals damage Tk 3 lakh crops in Pabna

A gang backed by a section of local influential land grabbers carried out the act

Our Correspondent, Pabna

A gang of criminals backed by a section of influential encroachers have destroyed banana plants and other crops on 5.92 acres of land in Char Bhoibanipur area under Hemayetpur union of Pabna Sadar upazila.

However, alleged encroachers—Pabna Awami League (AL) agriculture affairs secretary Abdul Bari Baki and Alauddin Malitha, chairman of Hemayetpur union parishad (UP),—claimed that the farmers are the illegal occupiers of the land.

Md Jamal Pramanik, one of the affected farmers, filed a complaint with Sadar Police Station in this regard on Friday.

Police were investigating the incident, said Officer-in-Charge of Sadar Police Station Nasim Ahmed.

Farmers of Char Bhoibanipur village said they have purchased the land in the char area from previous owners. They are giving khajna (tax) for the land every year. Asked about the tax payment receipt of the land, the farmers showed journalists the receipt.

Recently, the AL leader and UP chairman claimed that it is their inherited land.

Jamal Pramanik said the farmers have been cultivating the land for the last six decades. They have been giving tax for the

land to government every year

They have already given tax of the current year, he said.

A few farmers in the village have cultivated banana plants and maskalai (winter crop) on 5.92 acres of land this year.

A group of criminals backed by the influential encroachers damaged Tk 3 lakh crops on the land on November 3, Jamal alleged.

Contacted, the AL leader denied allegation of damaging the crops.

“We did not damage the crop. Rather, a group of farmers are cultivating crops on the land illegally because this land is our inherited property,” Baki said.

The UP chairman said this is a disputed land.

He added that the farmers are the illegal occupiers of the land. They are not the owner of these lands but they are cultivating crops there for the last several years.

Meanwhile, the AL leader and chairman at a press conference at Pabna Press Club yesterday said the farmers are giving tax for the land every year as they mistakenly got the land record.

A land record amendment case was filed in this regard, said the UP chairman.



Criminals destroy banana plants on the land in Char Bhoibanipur area of Pabna Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

She fights on, 24 years later

Septuagenarian Kanon Bala Devi hopes to get back ancestral home that was taken away over two decades ago

Md Aminul Islam with Firoz A Muzahid

It has been 24 years since retired school teacher Kanon Bala Devi, now 71, her sister Basona Devi and their widowed relative Nayan Rani fled from their village home -- in Shahbazzpur village of in Netrakona's Purbadhala upazila -- where they had everything.

The 140-decimal inherited property included the sisters' ancestral house -- about 150 years old -- vast croplands, a pond and a cremation ground on two decimals of land.

The three women had no choice but to abandon their property in order to save themselves and their family members from the wrath of an influential local, Abdul Mazid Khan.

Mazid, a member of the executive committee of Netrakona District Sramik League, had been creating tremendous pressure on the women to hand over their property to him for years, especially after Kanon and Basona's father Kashinath Pandit passed away.

The man had been threatening her and her family members with severe consequences including implicating them in a barrage of legal cases unless they conform to his demands, said Kanon Bala.

Finally, in 1996, when the three families moved out to Netrakona town, Kanon transferred out from Shahbazzpur Government Primary School, where she taught for 25 years, and took a new teaching job at another school in the town.

But no sooner had they left for the town, their property went in the clutches of Mazid and his henchmen.

Kanon Bala, as a last resort, filed a lawsuit with the Netrakona court to seek legal action against the encroachment. But Mazid soon afterwards filed consecutive counter cases against her.

Kanon's husband, Kalidas Goswami, a devout priest, was busy with religious duties at the temple and there was no other able bodied adult male member in the family who could shoulder the responsibility during the tumultuous time.

Besides, both her sister and she had their young children to look after and the families could not afford an arduous legal battle.



Kanon Bala Devi narrates her struggle of over two decades at a programme in July this year, organised in front of Shahbazzpur Government Primary School in Netrakona's Purbadhala upazila.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Considering the underlying threat conveyed through the counter suits as well as the overall situation, Kanon was compelled to put off her legal battle for her rightful share of the property. “I was so afraid that I could not continue...,” she sighed.

Kanon retired from her school in 2006 and her husband passed away the same year. Her sister Basona and their relative Nayan Rani had also passed on.

Kanon and Basona's father Kashinath Pandit, a homoeopath, inherited the property from his father. He later brought widowed Nayan Rani in their home and gave away 18 decimals of the property to her.

Kashinath was known for his generosity and his love for local culture, said many senior citizens at Shahbazzpur village.

Freedom fighter Abdur Razzaq, aged 71, said Kashinath always provided free treatment to the poor and helpless.

He or his family, especially Kanon, never turned down anyone in distress, said Kanon's former classmate Nawab Ali, another elderly resident, who is now an imam at a mosque in neighbouring village of Shankhola.

By a twist of fate, the lawful

successors -- Kanon's son and her nephews -- of her father's property are banished from the very village that he loved so dearly, lamented Kanon.

Her son and nephews are all grown up now and they long to see their ancestral home. But their every attempt to visit their home village in recent time was thwarted by Mazid's goons, she said, adding, “What more could an old person like me want except for spending time with her family and grandchildren at her own home?”

Her son Sujit Goswami said, “We recently lodged complaints with the local police station and the administration [about the encroachment of 140 decimals of our land by Mazid].”

Assigned by Netrakona Superintendent of Police Akbar Ali Munshi, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Morsheda Khatun of Netrakona Sadar Circle has already visited the area as part of her investigation, he also said.

ASP Morsheda said she finished recording accounts of both parties concerned and she was in the process of submitting her report following examination of relevant documents.

Contacted, Purbadhala Upazila

Nirbahi Officer Umme Kulsum said she completed her investigation in this connection and submitted a report to the deputy commissioner (DC) of Netrakona.

Netrakona DC Kazi Md Abdur Rahman said since Mazid Khan could not produce any valid document to corroborate his claim on the property, “I will sit with both the parties to resolve the longstanding dispute.”

However, rebutting the allegation of encroachment, Mazid told this correspondent that the land that Kanon and Basona inherited from their father was only 40 decimals, not 140 decimals, and he paid Tk 28,000 to the sisters for the property in 1996.

When asked whether he has any land deed to validate the claim, he said the sisters could not furnish a deed for him in 1996 when their sons -- the lawful heirs of the property under Hindu property succession law -- were not of legal age.

Introducing himself as a member of the then Netrakona sub-division unit of the Awami League in 1972 and the president of Narandia union unit of the party for 25 years, Mazid, 72, said a quarter with vested interest is making false claims about him to tarnish his image.

I implore you

FROM PAGE 1

Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner David Kessler and Yale University healthcare equity expert Marcella Nunez-Smith.

Mask wearing has become a political issue in the United States, with Trump mocking Biden for wearing a mask during the campaign and many conservatives contending masks infringe upon their individual freedom.

Biden said his team will focus on making rapid Covid-19 testing widely available and building a corps of contact-tracers to track and curb the pathogen's spread and prioritise vulnerable populations. Biden said his administration would work to get an approved vaccine “distributed as quickly as possible to as many Americans as possible, free of charge.”

Biden cleared the threshold of 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the presidency on Saturday, four days after the Nov 3 election.

Asked when Trump would concede or call Biden, Trump campaign adviser Jason Miller yesterday told Fox Business Network: “That word's not even in our vocabulary now. We're going to pursue all these legal means, all the recount methods.”

Trump has been talking with his advisers about the possibility of running for president in 2024, a source familiar with the discussions said.

Yesterday, Trump announced on Twitter that he has fired Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, and that Christopher Miller, who serves as director of the National Counterterrorism Center, will become acting secretary “effective immediately.”

Tensions between Esper and Trump played out publicly and had been simmering long enough that the defense secretary had prepared a letter of resignation weeks ago, aware that the president could fire him by tweet at any time.



Probashi Kallyan Bank
Common Services Department
Head Office, Dhaka
Website: www.pkb.gov.bd

Invitation for Re-Tender (Goods) Through e-GP

e-Tenders is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following goods as follows:


Tender ID/Reference No.	Name of supply	Date of last selling of document	Closing date & time
508613 PKB/CSD/FUR/2020-21/02	Manufacture, Supplying and Installation of Fire Proof Iron Safe	25-Nov-2020 16:00	26-Nov-2020 16:00

The interested bidders may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender. This is an online tender invitation, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any e-GP registered bank branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Mohammad Zainal Abedin
Assistant Vice President
E-mail: csd@pkb.gov.bd

GD-1790

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়
বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া
E-mail: biujnagar@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd



“মুজিববর্ষে যাজ্ঞখাত এগিয়ে যাবে অনেক ধাপ”

তারিখঃ ০৮/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ

স্মারক নং-উজ্যাক্স/বিজয়/গ্রাণ্ড/২০২০/৪১৪

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছর উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ কমপ্লেক্স, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া এর এমএসআর মালামাল সরবরাহের জন্য এমএসআর টিকাদার/সরবরাহকারীদের নিকট এইতঃ সীলনামাযুক্ত বামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১	মজ্জালাল/বিভাগ	যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মজ্জালাল (যাজ্ঞ সেবা বিভাগ)।
০২	গরু/গরুভিটা	উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ কমপ্লেক্স, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
০৩	সরবরাহকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ	উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তা, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
০৪	দরপত্র প্রাপ্তি ও সংগ্রহের পদ্ধতি	দরপত্র উন্মুক্ত পদ্ধতি।
০৫	আবেদনমূলক দরপত্রের সূত্র নং	উজ্যাক্স/বিজয়/গ্রাণ্ড/২০২০-৪১৪ তারিখঃ ০৮/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ
০৬	বাকট/বাকট উপ	রাজস্ব বাকট (জিএস)।
০৭	দরপত্র প্রাপ্তিকারের নাম	(ক) উপজেলা (ইউএসএল) বাকট (খ) টিকিলা জম্মাতি (গ) গজ, ব্যাডেম, কুলা ইত্যাদি (ঘ) লিটেন সানি (ঙ) এএসএসআর অফিসার।
০৮	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির শেষ তারিখ	২৮/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
০৯	দরপত্র জমাাদানের শেষ তারিখ	৩০/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০	দরপত্র বন্ধ হওয়ার তারিখ ও সময়	৩০/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত, দরপত্রদাতাগণের সমুখে (যদি সেই উপস্থিত থাকেন)।
১১	দরপত্র প্রাপ্তির স্থান	উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
১২	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়/অফিসার ইনচার্জ কার্যালয়, বিজয়নগর থানা, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
১৩	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।
১৪	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	(ক) গ্রুপ-৭৫০/- (খ) গ্রুপ-৪০০/- (গ) গ্রুপ-৪০০/- (ঘ) গ্রুপ-৪০০/- (ঙ) গ্রুপ-৪০০/- (অফসেটযোগ্য)।
১৫	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য পরিশোধের নিয়ম	উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তা, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া এর অনুব্রূপ সোনালী ব্যাংক, বিজয়নগর শাখা, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া এর কোড নং-১-২৭১১-০০০০-২৩৬৬ কোডে ট্রেজারী চালানদে মাধ্যমে জমাাদান করিয়া জমার স্বপক্ষে অদায়েন জমার সদর সংগ্রহপূর্বক দরপত্র সিডিউল সরাহ করা যাবে।
১৬	দরপত্রের সহিত দাখিলকৃত জামানতের পরিমাণ	(ক) গ্রুপ-২৭,০০০/- (খ) গ্রুপ-১৫,০০০/- (গ) গ্রুপ-৮,০০০/- (ঘ) গ্রুপ-৮,০০০/- (ঙ) গ্রুপ-৮,০০০/- (প্রতি গ্রুপ) ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার, উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তা, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া এর অনুব্রূপ দাখিল করিতে হইবে।

বিশেষ জ্ঞাতব্য

১৭। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম ডাঃ মোঃ মাহমুদ।

১৮। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তা, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।

১৯। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া।

২০। দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়ের ফোন নং-১৭১১-০০০০-২৩৬৬, ই-মেইল- biujnagar@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

২১। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণে বর্শনো যাজ্ঞই যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ/খারিজ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২২। বিজ্ঞপ্তি শর্তাবলী: দরপত্র সিডিউলের সহিত সংযুক্ত থাকিবে।

ডাঃ মোঃ মাহমুদ
উপজেলা যাজ্ঞ ও পরিবার পরিচরিত কর্মকর্তা (ডাঃ)
বিজয়নগর, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া

জিডি-১৭৮৯

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার	
কাস্টম হাউস, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা	
ওয়েবসাইটঃ www.dch.gov.bd	
নথি নং-১(১৫)১৩/সাধাঃ/জাতীয় ভ্যাট দিবস ও ভ্যাট সপ্তাহ, ২০২০/২০২০/৫২৩(২)	তারিখঃ ০৯/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি	
এতদ্বারা প্রকৃত দরপত্রদাতাগণের নিকট থেকে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট এ্যাক্ট, ২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ মোতাবেক Open Tender Method (OTM) অনুযায়ী দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।	
০১।	মজ্জালাল/বিভাগ : অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বিভাগ, অর্থ মজ্জালাল, ঢাকা।
০২।	অধিদপ্তর/দপ্তর : কাস্টম হাউস, ঢাকা।
০৩।	ব্যয়ের উদ্দেশ্য : সরকার অনুমোদিত বাজেট।
০৪।	ক্রয়কারী সত্তাধিকারীর নাম : কমিশনার, কাস্টম হাউস, কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা।
০৫।	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর দপ্তরের নাম : কাস্টম হাউস, ঢাকা।
০৬।	দরপত্রের নাম : Procuring the gift items for National VAT Day, 2020
০৭।	দরপত্র তফসিল প্রাপ্তির দপ্তরের নাম : বেতন ও হিসাবরক্ষণ কর্মকর্তা (ভারপ্রাপ্ত), কাস্টম হাউস, ঢাকা (৪র্থ তলা, কক্ষ নং-৪১৮)।
০৮।	দরপত্র সিডিউল গ্রহণের দপ্তরের নাম ও ঠিকানা : সহকারী কমিশনার (সাধারণ শাখা), কক্ষ নং-২১৩, ২য় তলা, কাস্টম হাউস, ঢাকা।
০৯।	দরপত্র খোলার দপ্তরের নাম ও ঠিকানা : যুগ্ম কমিশনার, কক্ষ নং-২০১, ২য় তলা, কাস্টম হাউস, ঢাকা।
১০।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের সময়কাল : ১০/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ থেকে ২৪/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে।
১১।	দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময় : ২৫/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ ২.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে দরপত্র বাজেট জমা দিতে হবে।
১২।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময় : ২৫/১১/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ বিকাল ৩.০০ ঘটিকা।
১৩।	কার্য সম্পাদনের সময় : চুক্তি পরবর্তী ১০ (দশ) দিনের মধ্যে সরবরাহ সম্পন্ন করতে হবে।
১৪।	দরপত্র দাখিলের যোগ্যতা : (ক) বাংলাদেশী প্রকৃত সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান। (খ) দরদাতাগণকে উৎপাদনকারীর অনুমোদিত প্রতিনিধি/উৎপাদনকারীর স্থানীয় প্রতিনিধি/উৎপাদনকারীর অনুমোদিত ডিস্ট্রিবিউটর হতে হবে। (গ) দরদাতাগণকে (সকল লটারি ক্ষেত্রে) গিফট আইটেম সরবরাহে কমপক্ষে ৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের General Experience থাকতে হবে।
১৫।	বিশেষ শর্তাবলী : (ক) দরপত্র সম্পর্কিত সকল কার্যাদি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট এ্যাক্ট, ২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ অনুযায়ী পরিচালিত হবে। (খ) দরপত্রের সাথে নিম্নবর্ণিত হালনাগাদ কাগজপত্রাদির সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি অবশ্যই দাখিল করতে হবেঃ (১) হালনাগাদ নবায়নকৃত ট্রেড লাইসেন্স। (২) হালনাগাদ আয়কর পরিশোধের সনদপত্র। (৩) ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট (১৩ ডিজিট হতে হবে)। (৪) ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি সার্টিফিকেট (ম্যুনতম ৮০,০০,০০০/- (আশি লক্ষ) টাকার স্থিতি)। (৫) সমাজতায় পণ্য সরবরাহের পূর্ব অভিজ্ঞতার প্রমাণপত্র (দরপত্র তফসিল অনুযায়ী)।
১৬।	কাজের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ : জাতীয় ভ্যাট দিবস ও ভ্যাট সপ্তাহ, ২০২০ এর উপহার সামগ্রী সরবরাহ সংক্রান্ত (বিজ্ঞপ্তি স্পেসিফিকেশন ও পণ্যের সংখ্যা দরপত্র সিডিউলে উল্লেখ আছে)। (লেদার ব্যাগ, কোভিড-19 সফট ব্যাগ, হ্যাড স্যানিটাইজার (একটি বোতল ও একটি পেন) ও মুজিববর্ষের লোগো বিশিষ্ট কোট পিন)।
১৭।	অনুচ্ছেদ-১৬ এ বর্ণিত পণ্যের দরপত্রদাতাগণকে দরপত্রের সাথে ৩,০০,০০০/- (তিন লক্ষ টাকা মাত্র) টাকা জমানাত যে কোন তফসিলী ব্যাংকের পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (ফেরতযোগ্য) কমিশনার, কাস্টম হাউস, ঢাকা-এর অনুব্রূপে দাখিল করতে হবে।
১৮।	সোনালী ব্যাংক, কাস্টম হাউস শাখা, ঢাকায় ২,০০০/- (দুই হাজার) টাকা (অফসেটযোগ্য) ট্রেজারী চালান কোড নং-১-১১৩১-০০০৫-২৬৮১ দেওয়া দিয়ে চালানের মূল প্রশিক্ষণ নিজেসব লেটারহেড প্যাডে আবেদনপূর্বক এ দপ্তরের বেতন ও হিসাবরক্ষণ কর্মকর্তা (ভারপ্রাপ্ত), কাস্টম হাউস, ঢাকা-এর নিকট হতে দরপত্র (তফসিল) ক্রয় করতে হবে।
১৯।	দরপত্রদাতাগণকে Instruction to Tenderers (ITT) অনুযায়ী Tender Data Sheet (TDS), GCC, PCC, Tender and Contract form, Schedule of requirements, Technical Specifications, Drawings প্রভৃতি যথাযথভাবে পূরণকরতঃ দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।
২০।	দরদাতাগণকে লটভিত্তিক পৃথকভাবে Tender Qualification Criteria fulfil করে দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। এক্ষেত্রে লটভিত্তিক দরপত্র মূল্যায়ন করা হবে।
২১।	Instruction to Tenderers (ITT), Tender Data Sheet (TDS), GCC, PCC, Tender and Contract form, Schedule of requirements, Technical Specifications, Drawings প্রভৃতি বিস্তারিত শর্তাবলী ও বিষয়াদি Tender Document-এ উল্লেখ রয়েছে।
২২।	কর্তৃপক্ষ কোনরূপ কারণ দর্শানো নাটিশ জারি ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলসহ মালামালের পরিমাণ/সংখ্যা কক্ষ-বোর্ডী করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন।
মোঃ মোয়াজ্জেম হোসেন কমিশনার কাস্টম হাউস, ঢাকা ই-মেইলঃ dhakacustoms@yahoo.com	
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NEWS IN BRIEF



Japan formally proclaims Crown Prince Akishino heir to throne

Japan formally proclaimed Crown Prince Akishino the first in line as heir to the throne on Sunday, the last of a series of ceremonies after his elder brother, Emperor Naruhito, became monarch last year following their father's abdication. The day-long ceremonies at the palace had been scheduled for April but were postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic and have been scaled back as infection keeps rising, although Japan has escaped the explosive outbreak seen in many other countries. Under Japanese law, only males can inherit the throne, so Naruhito's only offspring, 18-year-old Princess Aiko, is ineligible.

Moves to amend the law lost steam when Akishino's wife bore a son, Hisahito, in 2006.

India court bans firecrackers in cities ahead of Diwali

India's environmental yesterday court ordered a ban on firecrackers during the country's biggest annual festival in cities battling hazardously poor air quality, citing a link between pollution and a coronavirus surge. The National Green Tribunal said the role of pollution in the Covid-19 crisis meant that the ban was needed ahead of Diwali celebrations on Saturday. Traditionally, millions of firecrackers are set off during Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Light, but the practice has been blamed for worsening air pollution -- especially in northern India which suffers from serious smog every winter. The court said a general ban in all cities with rising air pollution should last until November 30. India has the second-highest number of coronavirus infections in the world, and experts have raised concerns about air pollution worsening the symptoms of respiratory illnesses such as Covid-19.

Eta makes landfall in Florida Keys after lashing Cuba

Tropical Storm Eta made landfall at the Florida Keys late Sunday and was set to bring hurricane conditions after slamming Cuba and earlier cutting a deadly path through Central America and southern Mexico. Eta made landfall at 0400 GMT in Lower Matecumbe Key in the Florida Keys, the NHC said, adding the "strong tropical storm" was blowing maximum sustained winds of 65 miles (100 kilometers) per hour. Heavy rains were reported in the eastern half of Cuba, where authorities have evacuated thousands of people due to the risk of flooding. Eta hit Nicaragua on Tuesday as a powerful hurricane before losing strength. It caused torrential rains that have left some 200 victims dead or missing in Central America. The most affected country has been Guatemala, where about 150 people are missing.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Biden begins post-polls transition

Trump to launch barrage of lawsuits, plans campaign-style rallies to protest rigging

AGENCIES

US President-elect Joe Biden has taken the first steps towards moving into the White House in 73 days, as Donald Trump again refused to admit defeat and tried to sow doubt about the election results.

With congratulations pouring in from world leaders and supporters nursing hangovers after a night of celebrations, Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris announced they would receive a joint briefing Monday in Wilmington, Delaware from their transition Covid-19 advisory team.

Biden would then deliver remarks on coronavirus and economic recovery.

Biden's transition website lists four priorities: Covid-19, economic recovery, racial equity and climate change.

"The team being assembled will meet these challenges on Day One," it said in a reference to January 20, 2021, when Biden will be sworn in as the 46th president of the United States.

Meanwhile, Trump played golf at his course near Washington, the same place where he was Saturday when news broke that Biden had secured enough Electoral College votes for victory.

"Since when does the Lamestream Media call who our next president will be?" Trump complained in a tweet on Sunday.

Trump, who has no public events scheduled for Monday, plans to file a string of lawsuits in the coming week, according to his lawyer Rudy Giuliani, who said he had "a lot of evidence" of fraud.

But former president George W Bush said the "outcome is clear" and added that he had called "President-elect" Biden and Harris to extend his congratulations.

According a report by Axios and confirmed by Fox News, Trump's campaign plans to take less traditional path to challenging the



Pictures tell it all. While a group of friends celebrate in New York on Sunday after Biden was declared the winner of the US election, Trump's supporters keep on protesting alleged irregularities in voting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

PHOTO: REUTERS



results of the election, including holding "a series of Trump rallies" focused on the campaigns ongoing legal efforts in numerous states across the country.

Biden, who turns 78 on November 20, is the oldest person ever elected to the White House. Harris, 56, a senator from California, is the first woman, first Black person and first South Asian person to be elected vice president.

Biden has pledged to reassert the United States' leadership role on the global stage through a series of day-one executive actions that would mark a drastic turn from Trump's policies.

Biden repeatedly promised on his first day in office to rejoin the Paris climate accord, a landmark international deal to combat climate change that Trump exited in 2017. He has also said he would rejoin the World Health Organization, which Trump moved to withdraw from this year.

Biden has also said he will repeal Trump's ban on travel from some Muslim-majority countries and reinstate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which allows "dreamers" -- undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States

as children -- to remain in the country.

Biden has vowed to name a cabinet that reflects the diversity of the country, although he may have trouble gaining approval for more progressive appointees if Republicans retain control of the Senate -- an outcome that will depend on two runoff races in Georgia in January.

Biden received nearly 74.6 million votes to Trump's 70.4 million nationwide and has a 279-214 lead in the Electoral College that determines the presidency. Biden also leads in Arizona, which has 11 electoral votes, and Georgia, which has 16. If he wins both, he would finish with 306 electoral votes.

Trump aides and allies have acknowledged privately the legal fights would -- at best -- forestall the inevitable, and some had deep reservations about the president's attempts to undermine faith in the vote.

Meanwhile, Chin and Russia yesterday said they would congratulate Biden after official results. Saudi Arabia, after refraining from congratulating Biden, yesterday sent its greetings to the president-elect.

UK PM's Brexit laws face House defeat

AGENCIES

Prime Minister Boris Johnson is expected to suffer a heavy defeat in parliament's upper chamber yesterday over laws allowing him to breach Britain's EU exit treaty - a proposal which has been criticised by US president-elect Joe Biden.

The Internal Market Bill is designed to protect trade between Britain four nations after Brexit. It contains clauses ministers say are needed to protect Northern Ireland, but would also break international law in a "specific and limited" way.

The House of Lords will vote around 1900 GMT on whether to strip those clauses from the bill. Johnson's government is widely expected to lose.

The publication of the bill in September provoked criticism with some saying it would wreck Britain's international standing.

Many saw the bill as a negotiating gambit to win concessions from the EU in wider negotiations on a trade deal. Brussels has launched legal action against Britain over the proposals.

Kushner, Melania advise Trump to concede

CNN ONLINE

President Donald Trump's inner circle is beginning to split over his ongoing refusal to accept the results of the 2020 election, as Jared Kushner and first lady Melania Trump advised him to come to terms with President-elect Joe Biden's victory and his adult sons pressed him and allies to keep fighting.

Kushner, the President's son-in-law and senior adviser, has approached him to concede, two sources told CNN. The first lady, according to a separate source familiar with the conversations, has privately said the time has come for him to accept the election loss.

Meanwhile, Trump's two adult sons, Donald Jr. and Eric, have urged allies to continue pressing on and they have pushed Republicans and supporters to publicly reject the results even as CNN and other news organizations projected the race for



Biden on Saturday.

Trump's campaign is planning a messaging blitz to fuel its argument -- unsupported by any evidence to date -- that the President's second term is being stolen from him through corrupt vote counts in battleground states, three sources familiar with the matter told CNN on Sunday evening.

Trump campaign spokesman Jason Miller in a tweet Sunday morning denied that Kushner has approached Trump, although CNN stands by its reporting.

"This story is not true," said Miller.

"Jared has advised @realDonaldTrump to pursue all available legal remedies to ensure accuracy."

Meanwhile, some members of Trump's party on Sunday vocalized their opposition to the President conceding the election, urging him not to do so.

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, one of the President's closest allies in the Senate, said "the President should not concede" during an interview on Fox News.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, who was also Trump's one-time primary rival, also advised against concession, saying it would be "premature."

And Sen. Roy Blunt of Missouri, a member of Republican leadership in the Senate, would not acknowledge on Sunday that Biden is the President-elect, citing both the legal challenges initiated by Trump's lawyers in states across the country and the ongoing vote counting process as reasons.

Special Supplement

Lump in the breast? It may not be cancer

A rare but treatable benign breast lump, granulomatous mastitis may be easily mistaken for cancer. by Annie Tan

PATIENTS. AT THE HEART OF ALL WE DO.®



Not many women get it or have even heard of it. But when granulomatous mastitis suddenly occurs, it can cause panic and fear.

This is because the condition shows up as a firm lump in the breast — a symptom that is similar to breast cancer. However, unlike cancerous tumours in the breast, which are usually painless, granulomatous mastitis lumps often cause pain.

"Women who seek attention for breast lumps usually come with the concern that they may be cancerous," said Dr Julie Liana Hamzah, Associate Consultant, Department of Breast Surgery, Singapore General Hospital (SGH).

Besides pain, other symptoms can include skin inflammation and redness, and fever. In more serious cases, there may be ulceration or even enlarged lymph nodes.

The condition is rare. According to Dr Julie, her department sees a handful of women with granulomatous mastitis a year. It is unclear what causes granulomatous mastitis, although some conditions such as tuberculosis and sarcoidosis, an inflammatory disease, can lead to it. Most cases, however, are idiopathic, meaning no cause can be found to explain its occurrence, said Dr Julie.

Idiopathic granulomatous mastitis tends to show up in women of childbearing age between their late 20s and 40s, especially those who have had children. Nevertheless, the condition has also been known to occur in women in this age group who have not given birth before, Dr Julie added.

Pain management
Diagnosis is made by exclusion of other diseases.

"Normally, we will perform a physical examination of the woman in the clinic and send her for breast imaging," said Dr Julie. If the scan points to an infection, oral antibiotics will be prescribed as the first course of treatment.

A follow-up ultrasound will be ordered three months later. At this point, if this condition persists, doctors may recommend a core needle biopsy to sample and examine tissue from the lesion to rule out cancer or some other disease. A biopsy is usually not done at the start.

In cases where the lump is accompanied by an abscess, the pus is surgically drained. At the same time, a tissue sample will be taken for diagnosis. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs will be prescribed for pain management. If the pain is not well-controlled, steroids may be prescribed.

Left untreated, idiopathic granulomatous mastitis resolves itself in nine to 12 months. However, treatment is recommended to speed up the recovery process, and reduce pain and discomfort.

Even after the condition resolves itself, it can recur. So the patient may find herself with another lump or infection in the breast sometime down the road.



SingHealth is Singapore's largest healthcare group providing quality care across 4 hospitals, 5 national specialty centres and a network of primary care clinics. With over 40 medical specialties and a faculty of 3700 doctors, it is recognised for the high quality of its healthcare services. An academic medical centre, SingHealth institutions are recognised centres of excellence, integrating clinical care with research and education to transform care for its patients.

Singapore General Hospital (SGH), one of the tertiary hospitals of the SingHealth Group, is Singapore's largest hospital. It offers multidisciplinary and seamless integrated care over a comprehensive range of clinical specialties. As a testament to its standard of quality and safety, SGH is accredited by the Joint Commission International. SGH also accounts for about one-fifth of acute beds in Singapore.

"Having said that, there isn't an increased risk of breast cancer or any other disease for these women. Idiopathic granulomatous mastitis isn't a precursor to cancer, but it may be a protracted course and almost always presents with inflammatory or infective changes. So we tend to want to control the pain and treat the infection," said Dr Julie.

SingHealth Duke-NUS Breast Centre

The One-Stop Multidisciplinary Centre for Breast Cancer Care

The SingHealth Duke-NUS Breast Centre is the largest centre in Singapore treating the full spectrum of breast conditions. The Centre serves its patients at 5 key SingHealth institutions, namely, National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS), Singapore General Hospital (SGH), Changi General Hospital (CGH), Sengkang General Hospital (SKH) and KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH). Annually, the Centre handles about 70,000 outpatient visits and manages over 1,300 breast cancer patients.

The Centre offers various treatment options including oncoplastic breast surgery, sentinel node biopsy and

ANNUALLY, THE CENTRE HANDLES ABOUT 70,000 OUTPATIENT VISITS AND MANAGES OVER 1,300 BREAST CANCER PATIENTS.

intraoperative radiotherapy.

Treatment is individualised for each patient, and at the SingHealth Duke-NUS Breast

Centre, every case of breast cancer is discussed at a weekly multidisciplinary conference to ensure the most appropriate treatment options are recommended.

Patients have full access to warm, supportive care from the team of experts focused on breast cancer throughout their duration of treatment; working together in unison to achieve seamless positive outcomes for patients.

The Centre's dedicated breast surgeons work closely in a multidisciplinary team to provide a full range of integrated services for the assessment and management of benign and malignant breast conditions in a caring and friendly environment.

Each case of breast cancer is different, and is reviewed in detail by a multidisciplinary team to come up with a treatment plan suited for each patient. The personal treatment team for each breast cancer patient includes a radiologist, pathologist, medical and radiation oncologist, surgeons and specially-trained support staff.

LAW OPINION

A quest for understanding constitutionalism

MD. LOKMAN HUSSAIN

Constitution is supposed to stand against the uncertainty in the political life in the state of nature, and it contradicts the ‘hereditary’ or ‘might is right’ order of monarchy, it denies – benevolent or not so – dictatorship or military takeover. It is rather a formula for a stable form of political life. Constitution is not a document of surrender to the destiny but a map to a destination. Discussing constitution only as a piece of law, may be supreme, tends to pull us in the oblivion about its supposed role.

Post 1947 constitutional events had to deal with two challenges - decolonisation and

interests and tensions underlying the kind of political order we want; thus, we have failed to carve out a stable political order. In search for a political order, the country was uncertain about the form of government. Even the most agreed form of parliamentary democracy was not diligently maintained. A caretaker system was created for mending the fragility of our political order, but it failed to fulfill the promise it once showed.

Being unaware of the legacy of colonisation of epistemology and jurisprudence may not prevent the temptation to separate the following two questions. Why does a country follow constitutionalism? And why did constitutionalism actually emerge? For the first question, one view, endorsed in Bangladesh, suggests that (post-colonial) countries follow constitutionalism for a fresh start. The vague idea of ‘fresh start’ may turn out to be that constitutionalism is somewhat a matter of fashion. In other words, in case of Bangladesh, Constitution is like a new piece of legislation that nobody knows what will happen to, when it faces the power it supposes to tame. Will it make the balance between the necessary power of the State and the necessity to control the State?

Constitution is born politically, it grows through judiciary, and some are the believers of ‘original is better’ when it comes to the question of change by Parliament. However, the constitution continues to grow, perhaps in a wrong way in Bangladesh. If the growth of the text betrays with what the sacrifices of millions were made for, then that is a dangerous and devastating growth. Let me elaborate.

In the year of its birth, the constitution was slim due to non-existence of some tumorous amendments and the few fatty judgements loaded with non-law literature. The present corpus of the constitution consists of nearly 23 thousand words, and around 112 thousand characters. It was several thousand less in 1972, the year of drafting of the constitution. A wise man has asked to imagine: how many martyrs have sacrificed their lives in 1971 for each letter of the constitution? Should one be oblivious of the spirit of constitutionalism that sprouts from the million souls sacrificed for this cause in this land?

Several metaphors may help us to understand the idea of constitution. One may think of it as an operating system for what we know as a computer, a constitution is an operating system for a political order. The drivers that connect different elements of the machine (computer) to the operating system should not malfunction. But this is something that happens to constitutional political order. One may opt to find an upgraded version of a driver for a computer programme to run. However, it is not easy to find upgraded versions of human actors who tend to run the political order according to the Constitution.

People also use the metaphor of Odysseus.

He bound himself – the power binds itself – to avoid the siren calls of sea, the illusive pitfalls for power. The State should bind itself with the rules of constitution so that it does not bring danger for its people. It keeps the people safe from abuse of power, and it keeps safe the ones who are bestowed with the power from the power from the vices of power.

In our country, we are more supernatural than the Greek gods. We all know that Behula made her journey to heaven and brought back Lakhindar into life. Behula’s raft is very fragile in comparison to the

The State should bind itself with the rules of constitution so that it does not bring danger for its people. It keeps the people safe from abuse of power, and it keeps safe the ones who are bestowed with the power from the vices of power.

warship of Odysseus, and it symbolises the land and people of Bengal. One who has ever floated on a raft of banana trees for crossing waters knows that it takes courage to rely on such a fragile vehicle and it requires a subtle sense of balance to safely cross the waters. In her journey Behula had these two virtues for making the journey. Moreover, she had an unusual mixture of courage and hope for which she travelled with the dead to return it to life. This unusual mixture, incomparable to the bravery of Greek epic heroes for different reasons, is uncommon to the ordinary mortals who run the political orders.

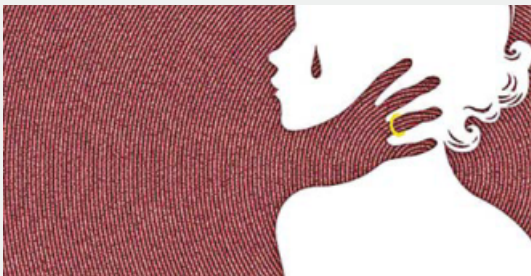
Let me speculate two alternative futures for constitutionalism. The first comes from Behula’s journey. The heaven is rather an intermediate phase of Behula’s journey where her ultimate end is to ‘live happily ever after’. This is the common dream of the people of this land told and retold through the thousand years of fairy tales. Then, they lived happily ever after. Did the people of Bangladesh live happily ever after they started their journey as a constitutional democracy? Or are they just continuously reminded of the American wisdom that ‘eternal vigilance is the price of liberty’?

The second future considers constitution as a fashion for a historical time. If we think of the future of constitutionalism, the people emotionally loaded with the aura of the fashion of written and pre-designed political order may become sad, if not unwilling, to accept that the fashion of constitutionalism may also disappear. But the hope to live happily ever after continues, riding on the raft of banana trees with Behula.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Marital rape and the law



LAW DESK

Recently, a child bride’s death in Bangladesh has stirred the whole country and brought the issue of marital rape or marital sexual abuse to the forefront. A combined reading of the Penal Code, 1860 and the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 reveals that marital rape is not recognised in Bangladesh. This leads us to visit some neighbouring legal frameworks in understanding the status of law there. Among the neighbouring countries, Nepal and Bhutan explicitly recognises marital rape. Pakistan, implicitly creates a scope. On the other hand, India does not legally recognise marital rape. Afghanistan’s law acknowledges the possibility of sexual assault within marriage but with a vital exception for the Shia community. Sri Lanka recognises marital rape only conditionally.

In India, marital rape is not criminalised. Exception 2 to Section 375 of Indian Penal Code exempts nonconsensual or unwilling sexual intercourse with women by stating that “sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under fifteen years of age, is not rape.”

In Bhutan, marital rape is explicitly recognised as an offence and penalised. Section 199 of the Bhutanese Penal Code defines marital rape as a coercive or forcible sexual intercourse within a marriage. Section 200 stipulates that a person guilty of marital rape shall have to undergo imprisonment for a minimum period of one year and a maximum period of three years.

In 2006, a revision in the Pakistan Penal Code has created a scope for acknowledging marital rapes as offences. Prior to 2006, rape was defined as an act of coercive or forcible sexual intercourse with a woman, other than a man’s wife. In the year 2006, the law was revised, and upon revision, Section 375 of the Penal Code says that “a man is said to commit rape who has sexual acts with a woman without her approval.”

Under the Sri Lankan Penal Code, marital rape is not criminalised except when the man and the wife are judicially separated. Section 363 (a) of the Penal Code provides that “a man is said to commit ‘rape’ that he has sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent, even where such woman is his wife, and she is judicially separated from the man.”

In Afghanistan, the Law on Elimination of Violence Against Women 2009 criminalised sexual assault against an adult woman by a man and does not exempt marital rape/sexual abuse from its purview. It is to be mentioned however that the Shiite Personal Status Law (applicable to the Shia community) explicitly legalises rape within marriage by providing that it shall be the duty of the wife to submit to the husband. The personal status law stirred the entire Afghanistan, fueled a massive scale protest in Afghanistan’s recent history and invited international disparage.

RIGHTS WATCH

RIGHT TO ACCESS INFORMATION

SUPTI HOSSAIN

All individuals as citizens of any country have the right to seek and receive information held by government (except those concerning national security) and private authorities with a view to ensuring transparency. In 2009, Bangladesh has enacted the Right to Information Act, 2009 for ensuring the free flow of information to the citizens to establish good governance. Right to access information is an integral part of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and expression. Moreover, knowing and receiving information is pre-requisite of the transmission of knowledge and information which is widely executed by journalists.

The freedom of expression is guaranteed in the Article 39 of the Constitution of Bangladesh as a fundamental right. Though the right to seek and receive information is not cited explicitly in the constitution, the Preamble of the Right to Information (hereinafter RTI) Act declares this right as an inalienable part of freedom of expression. Therefore, to make the RTI Act effective, Information Commission of Bangladesh (ICB) has been delegated to deal with publishing and providing information on demand of the citizens. However, the genus of this right can be traced back to Resolution 59 of the UN General Assembly adopted in 1946 and Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948, where the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information was encapsulated as part of the fundamental right of freedom of expression. Moreover, right to information has been enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966 (ICCPR).

Despite the legal framework, in Bangladesh, journalists face considerable challenges in accessing information held by public or private authorities due to misuse and shortcomings of this Act. According to the Section 7 of RTI Act, none of the authorities is obliged to provide information concerning state security,

international relations, intellectual property rights, law enforcement, judicial and investigation activities and so forth to the citizens. Inclusion of section 7 of RTI Act is undoubtedly crucial to secure state security and privacy of individuals. In pursuance of this, journalists are often excluded from receiving information and thereby are left with no option but to take resort to usual ‘sources’ to gather information while investigating on any private or public authorities. In accordance with Bangladesh Right to Information (RTI) Survey 2019, conducted by the World Bank, journalists are pointed as majority of requesters. As per this Survey, majority of journalists observed that RTI Act does not provide enough benefit in terms of receiving information due to its slow and time-consuming

process. For this reason, they lose eagerness to use this Act. For extensive and efficacious use of the RTI Act, the practice of disseminating information to the journalists should be improved. Furthermore, to give effect to the right to information, necessary procedures have to be taken for timely processing of requests of citizens for

information and the reasonable reasons should be given by the authorities in case of any denial or refusal.

As of now, 113 States have adopted right to information legislation to ensure effective and practical access to information. All states introduced this legislation not only to fulfill the international obligations but also to accelerate transparency and credibility between citizens and government. The RTI Act, 2009 of Bangladesh is certainly appreciable but not comprehensible to all people especially in countryside areas. Recently, some NGOs are adding their utmost efforts for individual incentive of accessing information by using RTI Act. Overall, government intervention and co-operation are essential to overcome the challenges of this Act with a view to securing the right to information as a fundamental right of people.

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LAW WATCH

Absence of the office of ombudsman: 48 years and counting

NADIM ZAWAD AKIL

Ombudsman is a nonpartisan independent official outside the bureaucracy, who is vested with the power to detect administrative lapses and faults, investigate, recommend corrective measures, issue reports, among others. The office of Ombudsman oversees and inspects whether the administrative officials are exercising their jurisdictional powers legally or not. It creates procedures for redressing individual grievances to safeguard individual rights. But, in comparison with the umpteen institutionalisation of this office in the western developed countries, the office of Ombudsman is stillborn in Bangladesh, even after forty years post-adoption of the Constitution.

Article 77 of the Constitution and the *Ombudsman Act, 1980* respectively stipulate the legitimate existence and detailed provisions regarding the functioning of this office. Probably since the establishment of the office was not made mandatory, rather was left to the sagacity and discretion of the parliament, the vacuum of an ombudsman was not filled by the passage of time.

It is needless to mention that, if the administrative activities remain derelict and of unfettered type, tyranny becomes the norm. As Bangladesh emerged from the British colonial rule afterward through the neo-colonialism of the then Pakistan, it inherited an asymmetric political order where administration has had dominance over maximum institutions. From Bangladesh’s perspective, the method of repressing administrative malpractices is casual in nature and quite abortive. The Annual Confidential Report (ACR) is largely subjective and is not of much use. To minimise the maladministration, inefficiency, arrogance and abuse of power, the appointment of ombudsman has become a crying need. Formal investigations are cumbersome, time-consuming and protracted, contrariwise the investigation of an ombudsman is informal. To administer the operations of Government officials, executives and agencies, the installation of ombudsman is highly preferred.



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশের সংবিধান

The prerequisite of good governance is uprooting corruption. But this malpractice is so deeply rooted in Bangladesh that it has affected every sector, including the administrative apparatus. Simply put, our administration has been grappled by this gluttonous monster. Though the Anti-Corruption Commission has been established to oversee these malpractices, they hardly deliver fruitful remedies. To shut off the corruptive, permeating different sectors, including the upper echelon of the country malpractices, the office of ombudsman should be put forwarded.

Though the *Ombudsman Act, 1980* is an exhaustive and distinctive Act, it has multiple shortcomings. Only the head of the State has the discretionary power to appoint the ombudsman considering the recommendations of parliament. Naturally, the ruling party will appoint the ombudsman as to their conveniences. For proper functioning, it should be amended to ensure that an ombudsman acceptable for all is put in place through parliamentary consensus. Furthermore, the *Ombudsman Act, 1980* excludes the allegations on certain public functionaries such as MPs, ministers, judges etc. The Act also does not include “acts of corruption” and “illegal acquisition of property”. In a country like Bangladesh, where corruption and impropriety has crossed all the endurable limits, such a limitation can render the office of ombudsman toothless.

Since the population of Bangladesh is huge and rapidly expanding, one parliamentary ombudsman is rationally not sufficient. Bangladesh needs to appoint non-parliamentary ombudsmen i.e. equal opportunities ombudsman, children ombudsman, the press ombudsman, ombudsman against ethnic division, consumer ombudsman and so on. Denmark, Sweden, Finland have institutionalised these sorts of non-parliamentary ombudsmen. So far, parliamentary ombudsman has been appointed in 46 countries along with the neighbouring country India, Pakistan. Bangladesh must appoint the legislative and executive ombudsman both to confront the challenges.

Bangladesh requires the appointment of such ombudsmen who can scrutinise the complaints made against every public official including cabinet ministers, MPs, central bureaucracy, local representatives, military personnel, judicial bodies etc. and who can guarantee to take lawful, non-discriminatory, fair actions without extraneous considerations. Corruption, nepotism, biases in the public administration will be rooted out via them. The installation of ombudsman will affirm stronger and more disciplined democracy and mostly rule of law will prevail in Bangladesh.

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The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA TUESDAY NOVEMBER 10, 2020, KARTIK 25, 1427 BS

A unique and sensitive High Court verdict!

Giving the convicted a second chance to be better

We commend the High Court for a landmark verdict that demonstrates compassion and foresight on the part of the HC in the dispensation of justice to a convict accused in a narcotics case. The verdict declared that the convicted man Moti Matbor’s five-year jail sentence would be upheld but he would be allowed to stay with his family under probation if he could fulfil three conditions. The conditions were that Moti Matbor would have to ensure that his 10th grader daughter and second grader son continued their studies, that he took care of his elderly mother and that he would not marry off his 15-year-old daughter until she turned 18 as stipulated by law.

This unique and humane approach to meting out justice to a convicted person is truly revolutionary and may have far better results in terms of rehabilitating those who have committed crimes and giving them a chance to lead normal lives again. In this particular case, Moti Matbor has already served 20 months of his jail term and has displayed good conduct so far and under the Probation Ordinance 1960, he will be allowed to stay with his family as long as he fulfils the HC conditions. What is encouraging is the fact that fulfilling these conditions will ultimately benefit the convicted and his family, as well as the community.

It may be mentioned that it was after his appeal got rejected that Moti filed a revision petition with the HC challenging the trial court verdict. The HC then gave the verdict after hearing the revision petition, granting Moti probation facilities as long as he honoured the stipulated conditions.

The High Court’s unique sensitivity and forward thinking serve as examples to all the courts, which can consider this practice in the dispensation of justice. While criminals must be punished under law, in many cases this kind of sensitive approach may actually help to make them better members of the community. As a society, we must think of ways in which convicted individuals who display a genuine willingness to change for the better, be given a second chance to do so. This unique HC judgement shows how this is possible.

Is Bangladesh prepared for a second wave?

Lessons from previous failures will help

A report published in this newspaper reveals the harrowing outcomes experts predict we might have to endure while braving a possible second wave of the coronavirus, which threatens to derail Bangladesh’s feeble economic recovery, deal a massive blow to poor and low-income groups, reduce fiscal space and constrain public expenditure. The crisis wiped out at least 50 percent of the GDP growth potential in the last fiscal year, which ended in June. The pandemic has nearly nullified the advancements made in poverty reduction over the last decade, pushing a great number of people back into poverty and making millions of citizens jobless as the economy continues to suffer.

What worries us is the fact that even at the current pace of economic revival, these woes will weigh heavy into the current fiscal year. The cottage, micro, small and medium enterprises (CMSMEs) would be the hardest hit again should the second wave emerge. We are deeply worried since as many countries around the world are being forced to re-introduce lockdowns amid rising coronavirus infections and deaths, the government’s preparations can no longer be limited to rhetoric.

We must take effective precautionary measures based on projections, past experiences (especially of failure to control the pandemic) and general apathy regarding safety measures. The blatant deficiencies in our healthcare system begs to be reformed. Health guidelines, which we so miserably failed to pay heed to, must be enforced, while more testing and life-saving facilities need to be ensured. As there seems to be a lackadaisical attitude towards the government’s recent policy of “no mask, no service” and other directives, strict implementation is key to braving the second wave. The government should start preparations targeting those most vulnerable to economic shocks, especially the new poor. Social protection programmes have to include returnee migrant workers, garment workers and other vulnerable groups.

The government must pay special attention to supporting small and medium enterprises and make sure the rescue packages are distributed timely and effectively. We can follow in the footsteps of nations that have successfully opened up their economies whilst maintaining health protocols. While the government’s decision to make the coronavirus vaccine available to all free of cost once it is ready is surely commendable, its effectiveness is yet to be proven. Therefore, enforcing health guidelines, increased testing and supporting vulnerable groups should be key strategies to tackle a second wave and avoid further shocks to public health and the economy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Unfair Myanmar elections

With more than one million people disenfranchised or displaced, Myanmar’s election cannot be free and fair. The US and its global partners must recognise the election for the farce it is. A first step is to recognise Myanmar’s crimes against the Rohingya for what they are: genocide. That determination must be followed by a multilateral effort to press Myanmar to end persecution of minorities, hold military forces accountable for serious crimes, and create the conditions that will allow for the safe, voluntary, dignified return of refugees. Democracy only stands a chance when every voice counts.

Daniel P Sullivan, *Refugees International*

Myanmar elections reflect a fractured society

Its path to democracy cannot exclude the Rohingya and other ethnic minorities



become the President elect of the United States. Overshadowed by the fiercely contested US polls, the November 8 general elections in our neighbouring country Myanmar may have slipped under the radar for many.

However there were, surprisingly, certain similarities between the two countries’ national ballots—both elections took place against the backdrop of a global pandemic with massive economic repercussions in increasingly polarised societies, and were considered to be historically significant. The US elections represented a nation-wide pushback against Trump’s brand of right-wing populism, and the Myanmar elections represented a new era of democratic reforms that were ushered in after the 2015 elections, where a landslide victory by Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy (NLD) established her as the State Counsellor of Myanmar and ended outright military rule. Or so it was hoped.

Unfortunately, the similarities between the two nations’ ballots turned out to be skin-deep—while the US elections, despite many attempts by President Trump and his supporters to undermine the process, proved itself to be a free and fair exercise in a functional democracy, the Myanmar elections could hardly make the same claim.

At this point, one must acknowledge that a democratic process, no matter how flawed, is infinitely preferable to a country ruled by a military dictatorship, as had been the case for Myanmar since the early 60s until the historic 2015 elections. However, the fact that a quarter of the seats in parliament are still reserved for the military sticks out like a sore thumb—if Myanmar is ever to truly function as a democracy, the privileged position of the military, not only in security concerns but in national governance, must become a thing of the past.

At the time of writing this, Suu Kyi’s NLD is favoured to come out on top in the Myanmar general elections, despite the fact that the NLD needs at least 322 seats to form a government whilst the army-backed opposition Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) needs only 156. Early on in the day yesterday, NLD spokesperson Dr Myo Nyunt told *Frontier Myanmar* that the party’s internal

results showed it had won enough seats to form government—saying “We have won almost every seat in the (Bamar-majority) regions.” This was corroborated as results trickled in throughout the day, showing quite a few NLD gains in former USDP-stronghold constituencies, such as in Bago and southern Mandalay. However, the fact that these “centres of Buddhist nationalism” are now voting for NLD and not USDP reflects the dark undercurrent of racial tensions that have marked Myanmar’s polls.

It is estimated that a total of 5,643 candidates stood for elections across 1,119 constituencies in national and regional legislatures, with around 20 to 30 million people casting votes across 50,000 polling stations. What’s missing from this calculation are the number of voters who were stripped of their right to vote, either due to Myanmar’s highly controversial

many red flags. There have also been reports of members of different ethnic groups being denied the opportunity to vote for their specific ethnic affairs minister. According to Myanmar journalist Aye Min Thant, voter suppression can get codified in Myanmar law—“The way “race” is created through Myanmar’s law and is then tied to unequal rights mean that huge portions of the population end up in strange limbos”.

This division of Myanmar society along racial lines, with the NLD also exacerbating and encouraging these tensions and tapping into Buddhist nationalist sentiments to expand their voter base, despite being the party that spearheaded the democratic movement in Myanmar, is worrying indeed. As journalist and researcher Ben Dunant writes in *The Diplomat*—“The suffering of these minority groups is not evidence of

to gain voters, gives us every cause for concern. It seems almost like Bangladesh is being taken for a ride here—the carrot of safe and dignified repatriation of Rohingya refugees is being dangled in front of us, while within Myanmar, the anti-refugee, anti-Muslim rhetoric of electoral campaigns and the mass disenfranchisement of Rohingya voters are only further entrenching apartheid conditions and demonstrating there is still no place for the Rohingya in Myanmar.

Than Htay, leader of the USDP, recently told AFP “I cannot accept useless people in our country” about the stateless Rohingya, and USDP supporters even created a parody of an NLD anthem, claiming Suu Kyi’s party had welcomed “Bengali Muslims as if they were gods”. The fact that this political mud-slinging entailed accusations of being too accepting of other races and religions, in an attempt to gain support from the majority Bamar population, is very telling of a deep-rooted and insidious culture of assimilation within Myanmar, where different races, languages and cultures are routinely excluded from mainstream society. However, the USDP’s tactics do not seem to have worked—NLD is projected to gain an even bigger victory compared to 2015, although the USDP is refusing to concede losses in certain townships.

NLD’s return to power, despite the USDP being backed by the military, would be a win for democracy in Myanmar. However, its soaring popularity at home, despite its reputation collapsing in the international community due to Suu Kyi’s defence of the Myanmar military at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and her denial of the Rohingya genocide, is an indication of a society that is fractured along communal and racial divides.

Will the newly elected government of Myanmar push for a more democratic and inclusive society, with civic spaces that allow dissenting voices to hold those in power to account? While we hope democratic institutions will continue to evolve and become stronger, it is difficult for us to keep the faith in Myanmar’s fledgling democracy while minorities continue to be denied their democratic rights, ethnic conflict continues to escalate within its borders and the armed forces continue to exert their political and economic influence across the country. As the cases of genocide and war crimes against its military at the ICJ and the International Criminal Court progress, the treatment of the country’s persecuted Rohingya population will ultimately be the litmus test for democracy in Myanmar.

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Supporters of NLD take part in a campaign rally on the outskirts of Yangon, Myanmar on October 25.

PHOTO: YE AUNG THU/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

citizenship laws that have excluded the entire Rohingya population by denying them citizenship, or as a result of polling centres being shut down in almost all of Rakhine, as well as in townships in Kachin, Karen and Shan—all states with significant ethnic minorities who are likely to vote against the ruling NLD. Overall, Human Rights Watch estimates that at least 1.5 million voters have been disenfranchised in Myanmar itself, and that is without counting the close to 1.1 million Rohingya who have fled genocide in Rakhine and are now trapped in refugee camps in Bangladesh.

The marginalisation of minority groups in the electoral process, especially while Myanmar is engaged in the worst civil conflict in decades with the Rakhine armed group Arakan Army (AA), raises

Myanmar “backsliding” into dictatorship, but of its evolution into an illiberal, majoritarian democracy, in which the government is increasingly responsive to majority demands, but where the only protected minority interest is the military, which still controls key security ministries and retains a quarter of all parliamentary seats.”

What do these elections mean for Bangladesh? So far, our government has been inordinately patient with the Myanmar authorities, hoping against hope that a sustainable solution will be reached regarding the repatriation of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. However, the total erasure of the Rohingya from the electoral process and the continued demonisation of the minority group, with anti-Muslim hate speech actually being used as a tactic

US elections: Toxic populism challenges democracy



MANZOOR AHMED

MARK Twain reputedly said that God created wars to teach Americans geography. It can be said that God put Donald Trump in the White House to teach America how to protect democracy.

Whether the lessons are being learned remains an open question. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have now been declared the winners of the 46th Presidential race. Biden received over 74 million votes, the highest ever in a presidential election in the US.

Trump had announced himself the victor on the election night, demanded that counting of mailed-in votes should be stopped (claiming this to be illegal or fraudulent without any evidence), complained about the election being stolen, and mounted legal battles to press his claim.

Biden, in contrast, had called for calm, unity and patience, and expressed confidence about victory when the counting was done.

Trump had beaten the opinion polls and predictions in 2016 for a surprise win of the presidency. He had run as the candidate against the political establishment of Washington, vowing to “drain the swamp,” make America great again (whatever that meant), reduce immigration and build a wall on the southern border with Mexico. He derided international trade agreements and embarked on a trade war with China, the second largest economy in the world.

He pulled out of the Paris Climate Accord, calling climate change a hoax. He mismanaged the Covid-19 pandemic abysmally, causing over 240,000 deaths and still counting, with the highest death and infection numbers in the world. He blamed China for causing the pandemic and stopped US funding to the WHO, the agency coordinating the global response to the pandemic.

Trump kept trying to dismantle the Obama-initiated national healthcare plan that offered health insurance to all citizens and coverage of pre-existing conditions, calling it “socialised medicine.” He promised a better health plan but failed to come up with any, while risking the loss of insurance coverage of millions.

Trump’s misogyny and behaviour towards women resulted in lawsuits. His administration notoriously separated young children of asylum seekers from

A populist support base, once created, is not easily shaken by logic or evidence. Outrageous words, actions and policy or non-policy are the stock in trade for populist leaders.

parents and placed them in cages. Now, parents of hundreds of them cannot be traced.

Trump’s lies in public statements and his tweets (his favourite means of public communication) spawned a fact-checking industry and obliged Twitter to post warnings about misleading information from the President. He declared the press and electronic media to be the enemy of the people.

Trump branded the Black Lives Matter supporters as rioters and looters, refused to condemn white supremacists, declared himself a staunch promoter of law and order and boasted of unanimous police union support from across the country.

He stood by Israeli PM Netanyahu in his aggressive policy of annexing Palestinian neighbourhoods and shifted the US embassy to Jerusalem, shedding all pretence of neutrality in the Arab-Israeli

dispute. He boasted of friendship with autocratic rulers such as Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and North Korea’s Kim Jong-Un. He claimed a special relationship with Russia’s President Vladimir Putin when US intelligence agencies were concerned about Russia’s interference in the US election process.

Amazingly, Trump garnered over 64 million votes, more than he won in 2016. He built a loyal support base of older, less educated whites and evangelical Christians, bolstered by all kinds of people disaffected with the prevailing system, including a proportion of Blacks and Latinos. The Latino votes handed the critical Florida electoral college to Trump and almost 20 percent of Black voters supported Trump.

Trump has so far refused to concede the election and vows to continue court battles, hoping to bring it to the Supreme Court, where conservative justices appointed by him hold a strong majority. He will try to obstruct the succession process and urges his supporters to take their protests to the streets.

Conservative populism as a threat to liberal democracy is a global phenomenon that has emerged in the beginning of the 21st century. I had written in a column in this daily earlier, “Donald Trump managed to create a support base among the electorate by invoking white male working class resentments and real or imagined fears about various things—non-whites over-running the country, global trade taking away American jobs, hordes of illegal immigrants depressing job markets and causing crime and violence, and Muslims waging a war on Western Christian civilisation.”

Politicians everywhere appear to be taking cue and are trying to apply this populist formula to gain political advantage. Playing on people’s fears and prejudices is an old populist trick. A populist support base, once created, is not easily shaken by logic or evidence. Outrageous words, actions and policy or non-policy are the stock in trade for populist leaders.

Cases in point are Brazil’s Bolsonaro,

Europe (including Austria, Hungary, Poland and even France’s Macron and UK’s post-Brexit Boris Johnson), Philippine’s Duterte, and closer to home, India’s Narendra Modi and his BJP-led ruling coalition. The good news is that the nail-biting finish in the US has shown that the electoral system there works smoothly, thanks to tens of thousands of election officials and workers in the states and local counties under both Republican and Democratic state administrations.

Demography is another reason for hope. The Republican support in the “red” states such as Texas, Arizona, North Carolina and Georgia has dwindled in 2020 and this trend will continue. The Black population and other minorities, women and urban-suburban educated people are growing; diversity of the population will prevail in the political voice. Kamala Harris, the first woman to be elected as the Vice President, a child of immigrant parents of Indian and Jamaican origin, is an iconic part of this wave of the future.

Trumpism will, however, not disappear quietly into the setting sun. As Kamala Harris said in her victory speech on Saturday night, “America’s democracy is not guaranteed, it is as strong as our willingness to fight for it; it takes struggle and sacrifice to protect it.” And Biden said, it is time to build and heal, root out systemic racism and restore America’s soul with compassion, empathy and concern. The new administration has a big job cut out for it.

There are two major and obvious lessons here for nurturing democracy in Bangladesh. First, the electoral machinery has to be made independent and functional, enforcing its rules and mandates. Second, those who want to be major political forces and steer the country to the future must cultivate and earn the trust of the youth, women and the ordinary citizens; they must rebuild the organisation and structure of the respective political parties from the grassroots, giving all a genuine voice.

Manzoor Ahmed is Professor Emeritus at Brac University.

WORLD SCIENCE DAY FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Interplay between science, society and politics



QUAMRUL HAIDER

SCIENCE is a remarkable tool available to humans for understanding what is true about the world. It expanded the boundaries of our knowledge and challenged our preconceived notions of what reality is. Accordingly, scientific research has yielded a treasure trove of knowledge about many previously inaccessible domains of nature. The validity of such knowledge received confirmation from the fact that they led to new technologies that are helping us live longer, healthier and more enriching lives. Scientific research does not take place in a vacuum. It is a social activity with a political overtone. And scientists are very much aware of the intricate interplay between science, society and politics. Perhaps one of the most persuasive arguments regarding the rightful place of science in modern society was brilliantly articulated by the American inventor and science administrator Vannevar Bush in his report *Science: The Endless Frontier* prepared in July 1945 for US President Harry Truman. In the report, he notes that the “social contract between science and society allows scientists alone to decide what research best serves the society.” Having said that, the practice of science is never entirely free of politics. It makes its presence felt in science via money. While philanthropists and private foundations fund scientific research to some extent, most research is inherently shaped by the funding landscape of government, and therein lies the conflict between science and politics. Since decisions about funding allocation are made by politicians, deciding what type of science a scientist should do is no longer a scientific one, but a political one. Furthermore, there are examples of politicians punishing or favouring scientists for ideological reasons. A case in point is Trofim Lysenko, a Russian agronomist and biologist, whose work was enthusiastically endorsed by the Soviet government under Stalin because his theories supported the principles of Marxism. Hence the term Lysenkoism, used to reference

the manipulation of the scientific process to achieve ideological goals. On the other hand, the work of Andrei Sakharov, who holds an honoured place in the pantheon of distinguished physicists, was discredited by the Soviets because of his dissident humanitarian voice. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has so far claimed nearly 1.2 million lives worldwide, the relationship between science and politics is now smack at the centre of the world stage. While the world looked up to the United States to lead the fight against Covid-19, President Donald Trump, defying science, played down the severity of the virus by saying “It is what it is.” Not surprisingly, there is a surge of new cases in the USA, while leaders of countries who are carefully straddling the fine line between science and politics managed to contain the spread of the virus. Regardless, scientists are working tirelessly to develop Covid-19 vaccines. Trials are underway, testing the BCG vaccine to see if it can provide at least temporary protection against the virus, marking the first time a vaccine is being tested against a specific pathogen other than the one it was designed for, which is tuberculosis. At the same time, researchers in the United Kingdom found that patients injected with T-cells, which are white blood cells that are of key importance to our immune system, responded positively to the Covid-19 virus. Another example of the conflict between the value-laden space of political decision-making and the factual, objective world of science is climate change. Scientific evidence of climate change has helped to create a robust social and political debate about reducing greenhouse gas emissions. However, instead of responding positively to the debate, leaders of the fossil fuel producing countries are focusing on the uncertainties of climate models, or rejecting outright the findings of scientists, thereby sowing seeds of doubt about what constitutes “good” science. Nevertheless, scientists are trying to convince politicians that it would serve all of us well if they use scientific facts as neutral information to guide public policy. Lest we forget, politicians need the knowledge that scientists possess in order to give us a decent shot at enjoying the full benefits of living in a

high-tech world. Otherwise, they risk making ill-informed decisions on issues that are highly technical and complex. Politics aside, scientific research and innovation are principally responsible for decades of economic growth and medical advances. Indeed, scientific discoveries, along with advanced techniques and instruments developed by scientists, particularly physicists, in the past 100 years or so have ushered in a new era in medical science. The era began in 1895 with the discovery of X-ray, used today as a diagnostic tool to see through different parts of our body. Imaging by X-ray was dramatically improved after the invention of the computerised tomography. Other technologies, for instance nuclear magnetic resonance, are allowing us to recover from life-threatening illness which in the past would have been fatal. Additionally, positron emission tomography, or PET scan, developed after the discovery of positron—the anti-particle of an electron—allows doctors to check for diseases in our body, as well as help them to see how well our organs and tissues are working. The advances in laser physics have also made considerable impact on medical

research. Soon after the advent of lasers in 1960, they found their way into medical applications, namely ophthalmology, dermatology, cosmetic surgery, oncology, dentistry and more. More importantly, lasers allow surgeons to work at high levels of precision by focusing on a small area, damaging less of the surrounding tissues. We could not do without radioactive materials in today’s world, even if we wanted to. Radioactive isotopes, discovered in the early 20th century, are an integral part of nuclear medicine and are commonly used to treat some cancers and medical conditions that require shrinking or destruction of harmful cells. The use of nanotechnology in medical sciences is a rapidly expanding field. Originating from the Greek word *nanos* (dwarf), “nano” describes length scales of the order of a millionth of a millimetre. Although this field is still in its infant stage, there is a growing interest among the medical community to use the technology for targeted drug delivery, cancer treatment, nano-biosensors and nano-medical imaging. The discovery of graphene in 2004 is among the highlights in materials science

and nanotechnology. It is a sheet of carbon atoms just one atom thick, arranged in a honeycomb-like lattice with amazing physical and chemical properties. Graphene has potential applications in a wide range of areas of biomedical sciences. Chief among its applications is DNA sequencing, the gold standard for successful diagnosis of various diseases. In 1938, when physicists successfully split (fission) the atomic nucleus, it gave humanity access to something extremely potent: the tremendous amount of energy released during the fission process. Immediately recognised as the basis for weapons of mass destruction, it is now used to generate around ten percent of the world’s electricity. The letter “h” introduced by Max Planck in 1900 to explain the spectra of thermal radiation is the fundamental constant of quantum theory. Because this constant governs the scale of the quantum effects in the subatomic world, it had profound ramifications in technology. For example, it enabled the construction of microcircuits, quantum computers, transistors and semiconductors, lasers, iPods, cell phones and digital cameras that have changed the trajectory of our life from ordinary to extraordinary. It is now almost impossible to get lost whether we are on land, sky or ocean, thanks to Einstein’s special and general relativity theories, which play a big role in the design of Global Positioning System satellites that give accurate readings of position, speed and direction of an object in real-time. The satellites would fail in their navigational functions if the relativistic effects of time dilation and spacetime curvature in their clocks are left uncompensated. A final thought on the World Science Day for Peace and Development. In the past, scientists who challenged politicians for ignoring their advice have been accused of behaving unethically. But as we stare down the barrel of an ongoing global pandemic, we should realise that society forms politics, politics controls science and science informs both society and politics. So, as we move forward, a harmonious relationship between the three is ever more important in today’s fractious world.

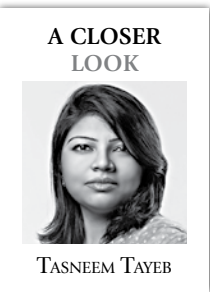
Quamrul Haider is a Professor of Physics at Fordham University, New York.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Have we forgotten the Bangladeshis trapped in Velika Kladusa?

Desperation, uncertainties, and the exploitation of the vulnerable



TASNEEM TAYEB

IF someone looks up Velika Kladusa on Pinterest, they’ll find lovely photos of the town and its beautiful landscape. Pretty as it may be, this little known town, in the far northwest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been in the news in the recent past for all the wrong reasons. Hundreds of migrants hoping to make their fortune in rich European countries such as Italy and Spain are being forced to pass uncertain days in the woods of Velika Kladusa. According to a report published by this daily on October 20, “Several hundred Bangladeshis are spending nights in overcrowded shacks made of polythene sheets. They don’t have sufficient food, drinking water and emergency medical supplies... Many of the Bangladeshis there said officials from some international agencies distributed food among them and provided medical support occasionally but those were not sufficient.” And having failed to secure shelter at a refugee camp nearby, these desperate people had to seek refuge in the forest. These migrants live in shacks made of tarp that do little to protect them from the cold and rain. Some of the others have sought shelter in an abandoned factory; the damaged roof and walls of the factory provide little relief from the unsympathetic weather. And the ones who try to cross into Croatia to ultimately land in Italy or Spain are often allegedly subjected to human rights abuses by the Croatian border police, who have been repeatedly accused of resorting to torture on illegal migrants. According to victims, the Croatian police not only brutally beat them up and push them back into Bosnia, but also seize their possessions, including money, phones, and even clothes. Danish Refugee Council (DRC) Secretary General Charlotte Slente told Deutsche Welle (DW), “People from different groups and nationalities have independently reported inhumane treatment, savage beatings and even sexual abuse at the border. There is an urgent need to ensure that independent border-monitoring mechanisms are in place to prevent these abuses and to ensure that all reports of abuse are

transparently and credibly investigated—and those responsible are held to account.” While no doubt these migrants cannot and should not attempt to unlawfully cross into another country, they are human beings nonetheless and no one can violate their fundamental rights to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education and more. Everyone is entitled



A Bangladeshi migrant calls for prayer in the woods near Velika Kladusa, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on September 30, 2020.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Bangladesh, is not the first time that this has come to light. On June 13, 2019, the Associated Press reported that aid groups were warning of an impending humanitarian crisis in Bosnia, as the number of migrants kept increasing in the northwestern cities of Cazin, Bihac and Velika Kladusa. The report mentioned that the majority of the migrants were from Bangladesh, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria and Afghanistan. One might be pardoned for wondering why the authorities in

legally or illegally—in search of a better future. From failing to eliminate the economic and social factors that force people to take such desperate measures, to not taking adequate measures to ensure the security of migrant workers abroad, the seemingly half-hearted actions taken by the authorities raise questions about their intention and/or ability to address these in the first place. Let’s take the case of the tragic plight of the female migrant workers—bodies of 473 of them have been returned in shrouds from the Middle East alone from 2016 to September 2020. And what have we done to address that? Does the government not have any responsibility in ensuring that women workers who go abroad to work are not tortured and abused or worse, killed while trying to earn a decent living? We have seen reports of migrants being inhumanely tortured in Libya. And yet, we are allowing our people to suffer in the Libyan desert because there is a war going on there, and the traffickers are using the situation as a shield to carry out their criminal activities. Why did it take the gruesome murder of 26 Bangladeshi nationals for the authorities to bust this trafficking ring in Bangladesh? These are unpleasant questions, but it is high time the authorities concerned spared them some thought. With the ongoing global health crisis pushing people further into poverty—a recent World Bank report suggests that an additional 88 million to 115 million people across the world may be pushed into extreme poverty this year, with the total rising to as many as 150 million by 2021, depending on the severity of the economic contraction—it has become easier for traffickers and smugglers to manipulate vulnerable people and victimise them. Now more than ever, the concerned authorities need to demonstrate strong political will through proactive measures to end trafficking and smuggling of people. The authorities need to be more vigilant, more agile and more decisive in taking action against those who prey on the vulnerable, and those who fail to ensure the safety of our citizens abroad, irrespective of their official position or political affiliation. The economic and social triggers also need to be rooted out. With the right approach and the right actions, trafficking and smuggling of people can be eliminated for good. But do we have the political will?

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

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**

1 Frolics

6 Molten rock

11 Degrade

12 Eyes

lecherously

13 Incisor’s neighbor

15 Running bird

16 Use a chair

17 Cry of insight

18 1972 Winter Games setting

20 Scot’s cap

21 Mine yield

22 Wilder on film

23 Nervous

26 Took a risk

27 Fishing need

28 Skirt edge

29 Brink

30 Oscar-winning Hitchcock film
- 34 Bol. neighbor

35 Memorable time

36 Jean – Godard

37 Clothing check pattern

40 The Yokum boy

41 Follow as a result

42 Like some toothpaste

43 Oozes
- 7 In the past

8 Bad winner

9 Flammable gas

10 Redfaced

14 Cork’s country

19 Fence part

22 Stadium event

23 Isaac’s father

24 Kenya capital

25 TV fashion guru

26 Pre-election events

28 That woman’s

30 Towel off again

31 Nearby

32 Funny fellow

33 Massage targets

38 Volleyball need

39 Count start

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YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

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Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan was relieved to finally be at the Home of Cricket in Mirpur yesterday after more than a year due to his suspension from all forms of cricket. (Bottom) Left-handed batsman Tamim Iqbal, along with a number of national team players, came to the venue for fitness test. Tamim is expected to fly for Pakistan today to take part in the PSL playoffs.

PHOTO: BCB

‘Cricketers’ fitness satisfactory

SPORTS REPORTER



All eyes were on Shakib Al Hasan on the first day of the fitness test for the cricketers yesterday as the champion all-rounder returned to the home of cricket -- the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium -- after 376 days since being banned for one year for not reporting corrupt approaches from a bookie last year.

Players, divided into four groups, underwent the test where the first lot of twenty cricketers were supposed to give fitness test at 10:00am. Shakib reached the stadium at around 8.30am and roamed around the place where he had registered numerous records in the past.

Shakib, however, did not take part in the fitness test. The Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) trainer Tushar Kanti Howlader informed that the BCB's physio Julian Calefatto wanted to assess the condition of the cricketer before taking the test.

"As Shakib returned after a long time, our physio Julian wanted to consult with him before taking the rest. He is expected to give the test within the next two days," Tushar told The Daily Star.

But according to sources, there was another reason behind that. The top-ranked ODI all-rounder, who returned a negative coronavirus test the other day, expressed his discomfort in taking the beep test with other players who were yet to undergo their coronavirus tests.

certificate.

When the issue was addressed to the BCB's cricket operations committee chairman Akram Khan, the former skipper informed that the board has taken all safety measures while conducting the fitness test.

"We have to make sure health

mandatory fitness test and a total of seventy cricketers gave the test on the first day.

Eight players, including the likes of Hasanuzzaman (10.10), Irfan Hossain (10.10), Arafat Sunny jnr (10.1), Rubel Mia (10.2), Shubhashish Roy (9.8), Iftekhar Sajjad Rony (10.8), Sohag Gazi (9.4) and Avishek Mitra 10.6 failed the test as they could not achieve the eleven-point benchmark for the beep test.

Nihaduzzaman top-scored with 13.4 while Robiul Islam and Pinak Ghosh scored 13.

According to BCB's head of physical performance Nicholas Lee, majority of the players looked fit and they are heading towards gaining match fitness in the coming days.

"Apart from a handful, all the cricketers looked to be in good shape and in fact, it seems like the players focused on their fitness during the coronavirus-induced lockdown. There are no issues regarding national and high performance players in terms of fitness. I think we are in a transition from physical fitness towards match fitness and I am hopeful we will be able to get that by playing and by the time international cricket resumes in January hopefully," said Lee.



Shakib found himself under hot water after he attended inauguration of a super shop in the capital last Friday less than twelve hours since his return from the US, contrary to health safety guidelines of going into quarantine after returning from abroad, even if the returnee has a Covid-19 negative

safety of the players and we instructed everyone to follow those. We will take the coronavirus tests of all the prayers when we will create the bio-bubble, but before that we have ensured health safety for every cricketer," Akram said.

Apart from Shakib, the other cricketers did take part in the

Will booters be underdone for Qatar?

SPORTS REPORTER



Amid preparations for the FIFA international friendlies against Nepal next week, Bangladesh's nod to Qatar's proposal to play their World Cup Qualifying match in early December has prompted questions about the wisdom of the move as the away match against much stronger opposition could be very tough due to inadequate preparation.

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has agreed to play the World Cup Qualifier against Qatar on December 4 after the 2022 World Cup hosts verbally asked Bangladesh early this month to play the match separate from the schedule of the qualifiers, which were deferred to next year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Nothing has been finalised yet as Qatar is trying to get the final approval from FIFA and AFC to host Bangladesh. The FIFA provision allows member associations to hold the World Cup Qualifying fixture if the pandemic permits and both teams agree to play.

Not even the most optimistic football fan in Bangladesh would expect a win over Asian Champions Qatar but they will certainly hope for another good show against Qatar, similar to what the boys in red and green put up in a 0-2 defeat at home last year.

There were reasons for the good fight as the booters were at the peak of their form just after finishing the 2018-19 seasons and British coach Jamie Day had also gotten enough time to form a good combination, which was further fine-tuned with two international friendlies against Bhutan.

But, this time around, the players have been out of action for seven months before being assembled on September 23 under local coaches for the Nepal friendlies. Jamie has worked for just nine days with the booters and is working hard to get the players' fitness levels back to a satisfactory level ahead of the November 13 and 17 friendlies against Nepal.

On the other hand, Qatar have been far ahead in terms of preparation as they have started their QBN Star League in early September with some 30 matches already being played, while the top two clubs are also gearing up for the final of the Amir Cup.

Besides, they have started their U-23 league four weeks ago and the Qatar national team have already played an international friendly against Ghana early

last month and are scheduled to play two FIFA friendlies against Costa Rica and South Korea on November 13 and 17 respectively in Australia.

"We are thinking of the Nepal friendlies and not the Qatar match, which has not been confirmed. My focus is to play two friendly matches at home right now. If the Qatar match is given the go-ahead, then we will have good preparation in November," said Jamie. "It will be a tough game because it's an away match. So, if we play [against Qatar], we will prepare as much as we can and we will go with enough training and try to get in more practice matches before the Qatar match."

BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem



Shohag said they have consulted with Jamie, the technical department and some top clubs before giving their nod to Qatar.

"Our team is ready and have been practising and will play two friendlies against Nepal. So, we have agreed to the Qatar proposal after consulting with head coach Jamie Day, the BFF technical department and four top clubs. Qatar also agreed to arrange a practice match before the tie on December 4," said Shohag, adding Qatar will communicate their final decision within this week.

One of the national players, seeking anonymity, said the condition of the team could be judged after the two friendlies and it would be better to play against Qatar in the latter part of December instead of the first week.

Klopp, Guardiola happy with draw

AFP, London

Jurgen Klopp praised his "dangerous" Liverpool team after they missed the chance to return to the top of the Premier League following a 1-1 draw with Manchester City on Sunday.

The Liverpool boss fielded a fearsome-looking starting line-up at the Etihad featuring Sadio Mane, Mohamed Salah, Roberto Firmino and Diogo Jota.

A flying start from the champions was rewarded with Salah's 13th-minute penalty. Gabriel Jesus levelled for Pep Guardiola's men before Kevin De Bruyne failed to hit the target from the spot three minutes before half-time.

A share of the points between the sides that have combined to win the title for the past three seasons leaves Liverpool in third, just a point off the top, while City are five points behind with a game in hand.

"Super football game to be honest," Klopp told Sky Sports. "Two top teams ready for a massive fight -- energy levels of both teams incredible."

"We were really good and dangerous," he added. "We were ready to make little passes -- there were moments we played too many long balls. Time to time we just wanted to get rid of the ball."

Guardiola said the draw was a fair result. "It was tight," he said. "In the second half we had more clear chances but a draw is a fair result."

"It is not easy to defend against Liverpool, normally they have three in attack and now four."

Mumbai's fifth or Delhi's first?

REUTERS, Undated



Delhi Capitals returned as a vastly improved side to reach their first Indian Premier League (IPL) final but will need an extraordinary effort to upset Mumbai Indians on Tuesday after three unsuccessful attempts to beat the champions this season.

Mumbai, the tournament's most successful team, made the playoff with a match to spare and crushed Delhi in Thursday's qualifier to stay on course for a fifth IPL title.

Delhi had to overcome Sunrisers Hyderabad in Sunday's second qualifier to set up a summit clash with a side who beat them twice in the round-robin stage this season.

"Amazing, this is the best feeling ever," Delhi captain Shreyas Iyer said after Sunday's win.

"This has been a rollercoaster. A lot of ups and downs, we have stuck together like a family."

Against Hyderabad, Delhi showed they have the tactical flexibility to try new combinations, opening with Australian Marcus Stoinis and recalling Shimron Hetmyer in inspired moves that paid off richly.

"You can't have same set of routines. You have to keep chopping and changing," Iyer said.

"In the next game too, we have to play freely and



maintain our temperament."

Mumbai under the captaincy of Rohit Sharma have looked familiarly formidable, their explosive batting line-up complemented by a fiery bowling attack led by India's Jasprit Bumrah.

"Having such a versatile squad, it gives me the option of changing the batting order," Rohit said after securing a place in the Dubai final.

"At times, if I want to rotate the bowlers, I can do that as well. The guys do understand their roles."

"It's not easy if you're not batting in certain positions, but we made it clear right at the start of the tournament that this is how the team is going to play and the guys are happy with that."



TWO DECADES OF TEST CRICKET

Today marks the completion of two decades since Bangladesh first took the field to play their inaugural Test match against India at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in 2000. Led by Naimur Rahman, Bangladesh became only the second team after Zimbabwe to post over 400 runs in their inaugural Test. Aminul Islam became Bangladesh's first Test centurion and his 145 was the second-highest by any player in a country's inaugural Test after Charles Bannerman's unbeaten 165 in 1877. However, there have been more disappointments than achievements in the Tigers' track record in the longest format. Tests: 119, Won: 14, Lost: 89, Drawn: 16 matches, Winning percentage: 11.76.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

No excuses for frailties, says Zidane

REUTERS, Valencia



Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane said his side could not hide behind the referee's decisions or their injury and illness woes after they stumbled to a 4-1 defeat at Valencia on Sunday.

Real conceded three penalties for the first time in their history, all of which were scored by Valencia's Carlos Soler, while Raphael Varane also scored an own goal, after Karim Benzema had given the champions the lead.

Zidane had to make do without a total of six players for Sunday's match after midfield anchor Casemiro and record signing Eden Hazard tested positive for COVID-19, but the coach said nothing excused their performance.

"We can look for one thousand excuses and everyone can find any

reason they want to explain this,"

Zidane said. "But we should not be looking for excuses, everyone in this squad is a Real Madrid player."

The coach criticised his side for reacting so badly to Soler cancelling

out Benzema's opener.

"We played well in the first half an hour but the game changed completely after they equalised. This has happened to us a number of times and I don't like it," he said.



Valencia forward Carlos Soler celebrates one of his three goals during an extraordinary 4-1 win over Real Madrid on Sunday. The 23-year-old missed a spot-kick before converting three more attempts to grab a rare treble of spot-kicks against Zinedine Zidane's men.

PHOTO: TWITTER

"We need to really analyse what is going wrong because any little thing can cause us lots of difficulties. Once we conceded the first goal we couldn't get back into the game. A lot of things went against us today."

Real goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, however, felt his side were unlucky.

"We were very motivated to turn the game around at halftime but I had to make a save as soon as the second half started and then we conceded two penalties," he said.

"I think (Valencia striker) Maxi Gomez fouled Marcelo but Maxi shouted louder and they gave a penalty. There was also a foul on Asensio, we were talking about that in the dressing room but you can't change anything in the dressing room."

"I don't know how to explain it, they didn't create too many chances but we had three penalties go against us and their second goal was very bad luck."

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Work in progress using Shah Cement

‘Milestone’ Pfizer vaccine boosts hope

WHO chief urges all to beef up protection as global cases soar

AFP, Washington

One of the teams racing to develop a coronavirus vaccine yesterday announced its drug had shown 90 percent effectiveness against the illness, sending stock markets soaring and raising hopes of an end to draconian restrictions on movement.

US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer said tests involving more than 40,000 people had provided results that were a “critical milestone” in the search for a vaccine, as global infections soared passed 50 million -- almost one-fifth of them in the United States.

Stock markets had already jumped after Democrat Joe Biden was called as the winner of the US presidential election on the weekend, and accelerated rapidly on the vaccine news.

An effective vaccine is seen as the best hope to break the cycle of deadly virus surges followed by severe restrictions across much of the world since Covid-19 first emerged in China late last year.

Tens of millions of people in Europe are currently living under restrictions preventing them from leaving their homes, and millions of business owners are enduring forced shutdowns.

The lockdowns and other curbs on daily life have shredded the global economy but with few other tools at their disposal to protect vulnerable populations, politicians

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Despite frequent accidents leading to fatalities, labourers dangling from a ladder work without safety gear at a high-rise. The workers have been provided with safety gears and harnesses but they refuse to wear them saying the gear gets in their way of work. The picture was taken on Secretariat Link Road in the capital recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Biman won't fly to Kolkata, Chennai

Cites poor passenger response among other reasons

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday decided to suspend flights to Kolkata and Chennai due to a lack of passengers, among other reasons, amid the pandemic.

Tahera Khondoker, deputy general manager, public relations, Biman, told The Daily Star about the development yesterday afternoon.

She said the national flag carrier would not operate any flights to Kolkata from November 12 until further notice due to lack of passengers.

After around seven months of suspension of regular flights due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Biman resumed operations on the Dhaka-Kolkata-Dhaka route from October 29.

Biman was scheduled to operate three weekly flights on the route.

Due to lack of passengers, SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

CUSTODIAL KILLING OF JONNY Verdict delivered, compensation not

ZYMA ISLAM

A judge's court on September 9 made history by delivering the first verdict punishing three police officials under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act, 2013.

Imtiaz Hossain Rocky had been fighting a legal battle seeking justice for the custodial killing of his brother Ishtiaque Hossain Jonny in Pallabi.

While the fight is seemingly over, in actuality it is not.

The judge had sentenced three ex-policemen of the capital's Pallabi Police Station to life imprisonment and directed them to pay Tk 2 lakh each to the complainant as compensation.

But even after two months, Rocky was now beginning to learn that the compensation money would not be paid until the case is cleared by the higher levels of courts, where the accused party will be filing appeals to overturn the verdict.

“Two of the convicted policemen have submitted money to the court, while the other is on the run. However, Rocky will not get this money until he has won in High Court and perhaps even the Appellate Division,” said Additional Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Tapash Kumar Pal, who represented Rocky in his case against the law enforcers.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangabandhu greets Nixon

November 10, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

CONTINUED US AMITY ANTICIPATED

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman yesterday extended his warmest felicitations to Richard M Nixon on his re-election to the presidency of the United States. Bangabandhu in his telegram message to the US president anticipated continued friendship and cooperation between the two countries and wished Nixon and the American people all success in the years ahead.

PM'S DIRECTIVE

Bangabandhu directs relevant government machineries to gear up their activities for holding the general elections according to schedule. Brisk operations are going on to hold the first general elections on the free soil of Bangladesh on March 7, 1973.

Bangabandhu issues directives to make the coming elections a success. The Election Commission has been directed to finalise speedily the recruitment of the required number of officials. Meanwhile, the task of the enumeration of voters is nearing completion. The printing of electoral rolls is expected to begin shortly.

BANGLADESH VOTED GATT MEMBER

Bangladesh is today voted in as a new member of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) by the required two-thirds majority of the organisation's 80 contracting parties. The new member will formally join GATT 30 days after signing a protocol

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



JEWEL'S MURDER

2 more held, 3 confess

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Police yesterday arrested two more people on charges of lynching and setting fire to Shahidunnabi Jewel in Patgram, Lalmonirhat last month.

Rabiul Islam and Sujam Islam were arrested in the upazila in a raid, said Sumon Kumar Mahanta, officer-in-charge of Patgram Police Station.

The suspects have been staying away from their homes in Burimari area where a mob killed 50-year-old Jewel following rumours that he had demeaned the Holy Quran.

Meanwhile, three other arrested suspects Jobed Ali, Mehedi Hasan Raju and Abdul Gani Kabiraj on Sunday pleaded guilty to the killing, said Detective Branch Inspector Mahmudunnabi, who is investigating the case.

A total of 31 people have been arrested so far in connection with the

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Prehistoric hunters weren't all male



CNN ONLINE

Men hunted. Women gathered. That has long been the prevailing view of our prehistoric ancestors.

But the discovery of a woman buried 9,000 years ago in the Andes Mountains with weapons and hunting tools, and an analysis of other burial sites in the Americas challenges this widely accepted division of labor in hunter-gatherer society.

The woman, thought to be between 17 and 19 years old when she died, was buried with items that suggested she hunted big-game animals by spear throwing -- stone projectile points for felling large animals, a knife and flakes of rock for removing internal organs, and tools for scraping and tanning hides.

“Labour practices among recent hunter-gatherer societies are highly gendered, which might lead some to believe that sexist inequalities in things like pay or rank are somehow ‘natural,’” said lead study author Randy Haas, an assistant professor of

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3 land in jail over rape of 5th-grader

STAR REPORT

Three people, including a woman, landed in jail yesterday in two rape cases in Patuakhali and Mymensingh.

Police said the victim in Patuakhali is a fifth-grader who lives in a village of Amtali upazila. Around 4:00pm on Sunday, she was playing at her home yard when one of her neighbours Rashida Begum, 45, lured her into going to her home, promising to give her some gifts.

Then, Rubel Khalifa, SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 10

	Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4:55	12:45	4:00	5:30	7:15
JAMAAT	5:30	1:15	4:15	5:34	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Planks of wood gathered by smugglers at the Sangu reserve forest in Bandarban. They have been doing so allegedly in connivance with some unscrupulous employees of the forest department. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Protect Sangu-Matamuhuri forest from loggers

Demands environment protection body

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Parbatya Chattogram Forest and Land Rights Protection Movement has demanded the authorities protect Sangu-Matamuhuri sanctuary and Sangu Reserve Natural Forest from destruction and take action against the destroyers.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the platform said some timber smugglers were destroying the Sangu reserve forest in connivance with some unscrupulous officials of the forest department.

The smugglers have been using more than 1,000 loggers since mid-September to destroy the natural forest, it alleged.

The organisation demanded immediate removal of loggers tasked with felling trees from the Sangu forest, departmental action against dishonest officials of the forest department, stopping

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